

# Backyard Views

The Backyard Gardeners

Fall, 2011

The Backyard Gardeners, Inc. was established in 2007 as a non-profit organization to provide free education to homeowners in the Hampton Roads area on gardening and horticultural practices, designs and techniques in order to encourage conservation of our natural resources, the enjoyment of gardens, garden-related activities and creative garden art.

## Calendar of Events

**Garden Talks, 7-8:30 pm**  
**Chesapeake Library**  
**298 Cedar Road**

**September 20**

*"Preserving the Bounty"*

Janet Dillender

Canning and preserving educator

**October 18**

*"Things You Don't Do in the Garden in Fall"*

The Backyard Gardeners

**November 15**

*Landscape Design*

Julie McKendry,  
Eggleston Services

## Upcoming Events

**September 10**

*"Let's Talk Organics!"*

Organic Gardening Workshop  
9am-4 pm

Vendors open to non-registrants  
at 2 pm

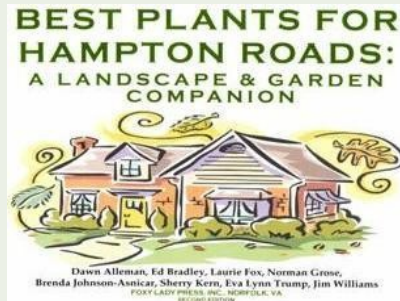
**October 8**

*Fall Garden Faire*

Chesapeake Central Library  
9 am-2:00 pm

Plants, info and education.

## Gardening Resource...A Book Review by Anne Rouquie



Best Plants for Hampton Roads: A Landscape and Garden Companion by Dawn Alleman, Ed Bradley, Laurie Fox, Norman Grose, Brenda Johnson-Asnicar, Sherry Kern, Eva Lynn Trump and Jim Williams

The fall is the time to plant trees and shrubs and many perennials, but sometimes it's hard to know what works the best in our area. Gardening in the Hampton Roads area can be a challenge. Our summers are hot and humid with rainfall extremes between drought and downpours. Our winters are usually mild but can be bitterly cold on occasion. Our soils are sandy, salty, boggy, loamy or clay-filled. . .one, some, or all of the above challenges face local gardeners daily. Fortunately, Best Plants for Hampton Roads: A Landscape and Garden Companion, written by eight horticultural experts who live and garden in our area, offers solutions.

The spiral bound book has a general introduction to responsible gardening and landscaping practices and sections on how to choose and buy plants and planting and caring for plants. It's divided into chapters arranged alphabetically for everything from Annuals to Water Garden Plants. Each chapter lists plants that will thrive in our area, the common and Latin name for each plant as well as light and water requirements, bloom time, flower or fall leaf color, size and comments by the authors.

The "Quick Picks" page begins each chapter and at a glance, you can see lists of "fool-proof" plants for various garden situations. Another great feature of the book is "Places to View Plants." Locations in Northeastern North Carolina and Tidewater Virginia are listed where you can see the plants in their natural setting.

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Every gardener in our area, be they novice or expert, can benefit from this book. They are sold at various garden centers in the area and we will have them for sale at our Organic Workshop on September 10, 2011. Remember, it's not too early to be thinking of Christmas gifts!!

**Help Us Raise Needed Money!**

**Bloomin' Bucks**  
with Brent and Becky's Bulbs

Brent and Becky's Bulbs offers a fundraising project for non-profit groups. If you wish to order from them, click on the logo above and select our group, The Backyard Gardeners, from the list. We will receive a portion of the sales. This a great way for you to help us help you!!

For more info on this program, check [www.thebackyardgardeners.org](http://www.thebackyardgardeners.org).

# Spotlight on Gardens

## *The Fruits of Autumn-Local Wineries* by Audrey Knall



Autumn...one of my favorite times of the year. Blue skies and crisp air. Cool enough to get back into the garden. And let's not forget the changing leaves, the harvests, the grapes and the anticipation of another vintage of WINE! We gardeners are always game for trying something new. So, how about winemaking this time? It's not such a stretch. In Hampton Roads we are lucky to have 3 working wineries within a short drive to show us how the pros do it.

**Williamsburg Winery:** Located near the James River just south of Williamsburg VA, this winery was first planted in 1985 and currently has 50 acres under cultivation. The winery boasts a long list of national and international awards for its wines. Tours and tastings are available daily from \$10. Dining is available on site. [www.williamsburgwinery.com](http://www.williamsburgwinery.com)

**Martin Vineyards:** Knotts Island NC is home to this local winery & pick-your-own-orchard. The family has been selling their estate wines since 1995 from the grapes planted on 11 acres of the orchard. The property overlooks the Knotts Island Bay and provides a scenic picnic area. Wine tasting start at \$3. [www.martinvineyards.com](http://www.martinvineyards.com)

**Sanctuary Vineyards:** Head further south on the Outer Banks of NC past Grandy to Jarvisburg. When you get to The Cotton Gin, stop! This is where Sanctuary wines can be tasted on weekends and purchased at any time. The vineyards are adjacent to the 'Gin' and grow both American and French grapes on 10 acres of vines. [www.sanctuaryvineyards.com](http://www.sanctuaryvineyards.com)

So why not plant some grape vines in your garden to use for your own personal vintage. It will take a couple years for your vines to mature to harvest enough grapes to create a small batch of wine. Generally, 50 lbs of grapes will produce 5 gallons of wine. Each vine will produce about 10 lbs of grapes per year. The best grapes for growing in our region are muscadines (including scuppernongs) which can survive our humid summers. Plant your grapevines in the spring. They need fast draining soil and 8 hours of sun to grow well. Space vines 6' apart and provide sturdy vertical support for the mature plants. A fence works well. Only amend the poorest of soils. A stressed vine will produce better grapes for winemaking. Tie the strongest shoot to the vertical support and prune out all other vertical shoots. Keep the horizontal shoots growing off your main shoot. These will be the plant's fruit bearing branches. Provide horizontal support as necessary.

To make your own wine, check our recipe in the Fall Recipe insert.

## **Benefits from Recycling** by Patti McCambridge

In May, the cities of Chesapeake and Suffolk joined a privately run incentive program aimed at increasing curbside recycling rates. They are the first in the Hampton Roads area to join, but cities across the country are already onboard.

The internet based program, [www.recyclingperks.com](http://www.recyclingperks.com) was launched just before Earth Day by Tidewater Fiber Corp, the biggest private recycling company in Virginia and the one that handles most curbside services in the region.

Residents in the two cities can open an account on the website for free and accumulate points in their account to exchange for gifts or services. A computer chip embedded in recycling bins lets the company track who's recycling each week.

Although not gardening related, this program is environmentally friendly and promotes reducing waste and preserving natural resources for our future.

## **Garden Hints** by Patty Bennett

- ☼ Fertilize fescue lawn three times-(SOD-September, October and December).
- ☼ Transplant deciduous trees and shrubs once they go dormant. They can be transplanted in our area as long as the ground isn't frozen.
- ☼ Protect your water features from falling leaves by covering with netting. Stretch the netting over the surface and secure the edges. Remove the leaves that land on the netting regularly.
- ☼ Remove any diseased or damaged perennial foliage. Leave some seed heads and foliage to provide food and protection for birds in the winter.

You may request to be added to the newsletter mailing list at [www.thebackyardgardeners.org](http://www.thebackyardgardeners.org) or by emailing [gardenguru@thebackyardgardeners.org](mailto:gardenguru@thebackyardgardeners.org).



## Fall Garden Events Calendar 2011 *compiled by Nancy Radcliffe*

### SEPTEMBER

- 1-5 Norfolk Botanical Gardens "Get Lost Be Amazed". Navigate through themed mazes.
- 7, 14, 21 and 28 Virginia Zoo Free Wednesday for Senior citizens 62 and older
- 8, 17 Portsmouth, "Early Bird Walk", Hoffler Creek Wildlife Reserve, 757-686-8684, 8AM – 10 AM
- 10 Virginia Beach Master Gardeners "12th Annual Fall Gardening Festival", 10 AM – 3 PM at 1444 Diamond Spring Road  
Virginia Zoo Horticulture Open House. Check Website for date and times.
- 10 Smithfield Gardens, "Easy Propagating Techniques", 10 – 11:30 AM
- 18 Smithfield Gardens, "What To Prune and When To Do It", 2- 3:30 PM
- 23 Norfolk Botanical Gardens, "Saving Summer Annuals", 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM. See website for cost
- 24 Smithfield Gardens, "Composting For Beginners", 10 – 11: 30 AM

### OCTOBER

- 1-2 Smithfield Gardens Annual Fall Festival, many seminars and events
- 1-2 38th Newport News "Fall Festival of Folk Life", Newport News City Park  
Virginia Zoo Norfolk Arbor Day, check website for date and time
- 5-6 Norfolk Botanical Gardens "73rd Annual Rose Show"
- 8 The Backyard Gardeners "Fall Garden Faire" , Chesapeake Central Library, 298 Cedar Rd., 9 AM-2 PM
- 8 Elizabethan Gardens Columbus Day Weekend Plant Sale
- 8 Portsmouth, "Early Bird Walk", Hoffler Creek Wildlife Preserve, 757 -686-8684, 8 AM – 10AM
- 8 Smithfield Gardens, "Basic Home Landscape Design 2", 4 PM
- 9 Elizabethan Gardens Fall Clearance Plant Sale, Manteo NC
- 15-16 24th Annual AT & T Town Point Virginia Wine Festival
- 16 Virginia Zoo, Military Appreciation Day, 10 AM – 4 PM
- 22 Chesapeake Arboretum "Autumn Fest", family fun, vendors and nature walks
- 29 Elizabethan Gardens "Harvest Hay Day", Harvest-themed activities on the Great Lawn, 10 AM – 1 PM, Bake Sale
- 29 Virginia Zoo, "Zoo Boo", 10 AM until 10 PM
- 29 Chesapeake Virginia Wine Festival at City Park noon to 6 PM

### NOVEMBER

- 5 Portsmouth, "Early Bird Walk", Hoffler Creek Wildlife Preserve, 757-686-8684, 8 AM – 10 AM
- 5-6 Smithfield Gardens "Holiday Open House"
- 12-13 Norfolk Botanical Gardens, "Virginia Camellia Society Fall Camellia Show and Plant Sale"
- 18-30 Portsmouth "Olde Fashion Holiday Window Art", High Street from Effingham to High Street Landing
- 18- January 1 Virginia Beach, "McDonald's Holiday Lights at the Beach" presented by Ntelos Wireless
- 24-January 1 Newport News City Park, "Celebration in Lights"
- 24- January 1 Norfolk Botanical Gardens, "Dominion Gardens of Lights", \$10 per car



## Fall Recipes (from *Backyard Views*, Fall, 2011)

### Homemade Wine

Feeling ambitious? Wine can be made from almost any fruit or juice. While you're waiting for your own grape harvest, try this basic recipe for making one gallon of homemade wine using a juice concentrate courtesy of [www.allrecipes.com](http://www.allrecipes.com). (Making wine from fresh fruit requires additional equipment to test for sugar content & acidity.)

#### Ingredients:

- 1 (.25 ounce) package active dry yeast
- 4 cups sugar
- 1 (12 fluid ounce) can frozen juice concentrate - any flavor except citrus, thawed
- 3 1/2 quarts cold water, or as needed



#### Directions:

Dissolve sugar in some of the water. Combine the sugar water, juice concentrate and yeast in a gallon jug. Fill the jug the rest of the way with the remaining cold water. Rinse out a large balloon, and fit it over the opening of the jug. Secure the balloon with a rubber band and poke a small pinhole in it to allow the carbon dioxide to escape.

Place jug in a cool dark place. Within a day you will notice the balloon starting to expand. As the sugar turns to alcohol the gasses released will fill up the balloon. When the balloon is deflated back to size the wine is ready to drink. About 5 weeks.

There will be sediment at the bottom of the jug. Filter it through cheesecloth or coffee filters and decant into another jug. Allow the wine to rest for another 2-4 weeks (or longer) prior to bottling and drinking. Enjoy!

### Pickled Vegetables ([recipe from Dr. Weil's Healthy Kitchen](#))



- 1/2 pound carrots, peeled and cut in round on the diagonal (about 2 cups)
- 1/2 pound string beans
- 1 small head of cauliflower, broken into florets (about 2 cups)
- 1/2 raw jicama, peeled and cut in half and cut into sticks

#### Dressing:

- 2 cups purified water
- 2 1/2 cups cider vinegar
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon dill weed
- 6 cloves garlic
- 1/4 cup pickling spices (*or* 5 bay leaves, 1 T mustard seed, 1 T dill seed and 1 1/2 tsp red chili flakes)

#### Instructions:

Fill a large pot with 5 cups of water and bring to a boil. First drop in the carrots and parboil for 2 minutes, then quickly scoop them with a strainer or large slotted spoon and transfer to a pot filled with cold water and ice to shock them. Drop the string beans into the boiling water and cook just until they turn bright green (about 3 minutes), then quickly transfer them to the ice water. The cauliflower will only need to parboil for 1 minute. Let all the vegetables sit in the cold water for a few minutes to cool. Drain the cold water, remove the cooled vegetables to a big bowl, and add the raw jicama.

Put all the dressing ingredients including the pickling spices in a stainless-steel pan set over medium heat, bring it to a boil, and cook for 2 minutes. Pour the cooked dressing over the vegetables and allow them to cool at room temperature. Once cooled, put the vegetables into a 1-gallon glass jar or lidded plastic container and fill it with as much dressing as the jar will hold. Cover and refrigerate for 2 days before eating.

Note: This is a colorful, healthy snack that preserves your garden veggies and provides a number of vitamins. The dressing is wonderful on any salad or mixed in marinades.