

Gardening News

August/September 2020



NC Residents Warned Not to Plant Unsolicited Foreign Seed Sent to Them

Written by: NCDA&CS

North Carolina residents who have received seed shipments that they did not order from China or other foreign sources are advised not to plant these seeds because they could be a pathway for introduction of invasive species, insects and plant diseases.

The North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has been contacted by numerous people who have received the seeds, which are likely the product of an international internet scam known as “brushing.” “According to the Better Business Bureau, foreign, third-party sellers use your address and Amazon information to generate a fake sale and positive review to boost their product ratings,” said Phil Wilson, director of the Plant Industry Division.

“Seeds are just one of the items used in this scam, however, you could receive other inexpensive items such as rubber bands, plastic toys, or empty bags.” This type of international shipment of plant material is unlawful and NCDA&CS asks anyone who received one of these unsolicited foreign shipments to save the contents along with all shipping labels and contact the Plant Industry Division toll free at 800-206-9333 or email at newpest@ncagr.gov. Plant Industry staff will contact you to gather information and pick up the package.

North Carolina residents are not in violation of any regulations if they received these shipments, but they are the key to identifying and stopping future shipments.



Examples of the types of seed packets being received. DO NOT PLANT, but report to NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

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Ouch, It's Hot...But It's Time to Start Your Fall Vegetable Garden!

August is certainly a hot time of year, but if you would like to have a vegetable garden in the fall and into the winter, now is the time to plan and even start planting!

Transplants and seeds for cool-season vegetables are appearing in the farm and garden centers and now is the time to plant. Cool season vegetables are those that like to grow when the weather is cooler. Plants like lettuce, garlic, collards, and kale are examples of cool season vegetables.

If you haven't tested your soil, now is also a good time, as the testing is free until Thanksgiving. You can pick up a soil test kit at the N.C. Cooperative Extension of Hoke or Scotland County.

Use the NCSU Extension Central NC Planting Calendar for Annual Vegetables, Fruits and Herbs to plan what you want to grow and when to plant. (https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/show_ep3_pdf/1595000591/23265/)

Remember that choosing whether to plant seeds or transplants is an important part of the decision process. Growing vegetables from seed takes longer than if you plant a transplant or a small plant grown in a container.

Some vegetables are hardy during the entire winter, while others are tolerant of some light frost. Collards, turnips, carrots and kale are examples of hardy plants. These will typically grow until spring. Cabbage and broccoli, while a cool season vegetable, can only tolerate a light frost.

Plan now and get ready to plant your vegetables in early to mid-August, with mid-September the latest time for planting many of your fall and winter vegetables.



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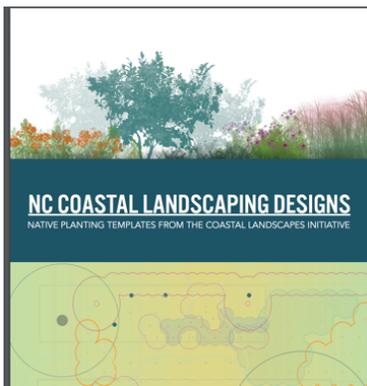
extension.umaine.edu



canr.msu.edu

Native Planting Design Template for Your Home Landscape

Written by: Dr. Lucy Bradley



A new set of landscaping design templates is available online from the NC Coastal Landscapes Initiative. The 10 designs feature plants native to coastal North Carolina and are intended for anyone interested in updating their yard or garden.

“Deciding which plants to use can be a challenging task on any property, and can be even more daunting in harsh coastal environments,” says Gloria Putnam, North Carolina Sea Grant’s coastal resources and communities specialist, who oversaw the project. “These designs will help property owners and landscapers with choosing and arranging native plants suitable for their site conditions and needs.”

The templates are divided into two categories: borders and screens. Borders define edges and organize spaces in a yard but also can work as stand-alone gardens. Screens block unwanted views and increase privacy. Each design provides ideal site conditions; a detailed planting guide; seasonal bloom or berry color; an illustration of the plantings at maturity; and maintenance tips. Designs can be modified to meet lot configurations, and alternative plant choices are suggested for flexibility. This resource was created with input from native plant experts and design professionals associated with the Coastal Landscapes Initiative, or CLI, a collaborative effort to encourage nature-enhancing landscaping.

Key partners include the North Carolina Aquariums at Pine Knoll Shores and Roanoke Island, and the Coastal Dynamics Design Lab at NC State University, among others. The full guide, as well as single pages, can be downloaded at go.ncsu.edu/CLI-designs. The site also provides a worksheet to get started on a particular property. “Spring and summer are a great time to plan for fall and winter planting,” Putnam says. “Assessing site conditions, choosing designs and

locating nurseries that carry the plants you want are fun tasks to focus on now, so you are ready to install new landscaping when cool weather returns.” Site conditions to consider during the summer include sunny versus shady spots; existing trees and structures; how the soil responds to heavy rain or drought; and soil composition. For more information about the CLI, and for additional resources such as webinars offering coastal landscaping tips, visit go.ncsu.edu/coastallandscapes.

August Gardening Chores

Divide Iris: Divide your iris clumps every 3 to 4 years in late summer. Carefully lift the iris rhizomes with a garden fork or spade. Pull the rhizomes apart with your hands. The sections should be about the size of your thumb with about 2 leaves. Older rhizomes without leaves may need to be placed in the compost bin. Wash the roots and look for any soft spots. If found, discard these plants. Also, look for iris borers, remove them, discard plant if damaged. Trim the leaves to about 4 to 6” long, in a ‘V’ pattern. Plant the rhizomes about 12-18” apart and so they are only covered halfway by soil. If possible, plant with all the leaves facing the same way. Water thoroughly, but do not allow them to stay wet.



Fall Vegetables: Now is the time to plant fall vegetables. You can plant snap beans and field peas by seed. Transplant broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, and collards during August. For complete vegetable gardening information visit NC State's Central NC Planting Calendar for Annual Vegetables, Fruits and Herbs.

Remove bagworms from cedars and wax myrtles. By removing the bags, you are removing the young that would have fed on your plants in the spring.

Water deeply but infrequently on young or shallow-rooted plants. Maintain a good layer of mulch. Shallow rooted plants include azaleas, dogwood trees, boxwood and hollies.

Do not prune or fertilize your trees and shrubs now. They are preparing for winter dormancy. Pruning and fertilizing will disrupt the process. You can remove any broken or dead branches at this time.

Order Fall bulbs now. Growers will ship at the correct time to plant them in your area.

September Gardening Chores

Watering: As both day and night temperatures begin to cool off, adjust your watering schedule. Plants are not actively growing, so have lower water requirements.

Leaf spot diseases are common on trees and shrubs in fall but rarely need to be treated. One exception is entomosporium leaf spot on Indian Hawthorn. Visit <http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/plants/pdf/hgic1078.pdf> for complete details on this leaf disease on Hawthorns.

Plant pansies and other winter annuals from mid-September through mid-October to get established before frost.

Fertilization: September and October are great times to apply lime. If you have not taken a soil sample, now is the time to do it. It takes several months for lime to become active in your soil. You can visit your office of NC State Cooperative

Extension for boxes and more information. Apply lime to adjust pH as recommended on soil test results. Do not apply fertilizer at this time as this can force new growth. It is better to let plants go dormant naturally.

Spray nectarine, plum, and peach trees for the peach tree borer. Pay close attention to spraying the lowest set of branches and down the trunk to the soil line.

Fall Vegetables: It's not too late to plant some of the cool season vegetables. Visit https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/show_ep3_pdf/1503937449/23265/ for a complete vegetable garden planting schedule.

Know and Grow....

Garden Peony (*Paeonia hybrids*)

Part Two: Site Selection and Planting Your Peony



johnson.k-state.edu



extension.iastate.edu



perdue.edu

Once you have chosen which peonies you would like to grow, determining where to plant them is very important. Peonies can live for many, many years. They don't like to be moved once planted, so make sure they are where you want them to stay. Also, don't plant another peony too close, they really don't like the competition.

Site Requirements: Peonies grow best in full sun. They will tolerate light shade but must have a minimum of 6 hours of full sun. The planting site should have protection from strong winds, but be well aerated to reduce diseases problems. Peonies prefer a well-drained soil with a pH of 6.0 to 7.0. Roots will rot quickly in poorly-drained soil; consider planting in a raised bed if your soil has lots of clay or stays wet. Try to avoid locations where peonies have been grown before.

Chill Hours: Peonies require between 500-1000 winter chilling hours. This means the number of hours between 32-40 degrees F to flower successfully. Peonies grow in USDA hardiness zones 2-8.



Peony divisions: As with all things, you get what you pay for. Peonies with 3 to 5 eyes and a healthy rhizome will do best. Smaller divisions will take several years to bloom.

Bloom period: Early blooming and single or Japanese cultivars generally perform better in North Carolina than other types.

Planting: Fall planting is best for peonies. Roots will grow throughout the fall and winter, allowing the plant to be established before the first flush of growth in the spring. Dig a hole 12 to 18 inches deep and 12 inches wide. Make a cone in the center with soil and set the roots on the cone. Do not plant eyes deeper than one inch. If planted too deep, this can reduce or eliminate blooming. Fill hole and tamp. Water thoroughly. To encourage deep rooting, water deeply as required. Once established, peonies are drought resistant. Tree peonies should be planted so graft union is an inch below the ground.

Maintenance: Mulch with 2 to 3 inches of organic matter in the spring. Apply a low nitrogen fertilizer in the spring. Use about ½ cup of 5-10-10 or equivalent per plant. Over application of nitrogen can reduce flowering, as all growth goes into plant growth. Soil test every 2 to 3 years to ensure you have adequate nutrients.

Winter Care: Never cut back tree peonies. They are shrubs and will not grow back if cut down to the ground. After frost, cut back stems of herbaceous peonies to the soil surface, as this will help reduce disease problems. Be sure to take a soil sample and follow results for fertilizer and lime.

Cut flowers: If you enjoy having peony blooms in your home, visit the Guide to Peonies as Cut Flowers (<https://peonyparadise.com/cutflowercare.aspx>)

Dividing Peonies: Peonies are very long lived, but sometimes you want to move or divide your plant. In the fall, after foliage has started to die down, carefully dig your plant with a garden fork. Be sure to dig well away from the roots. Gently move the plant back and forth to loosen the root system. Be careful, as the root system is brittle. Lift out of the soil. Wash away all soil and remove leaves and stems. Cover with a damp towel and let rest overnight. This will soften the roots and make them easier to divide. Using a knife, carefully cut sections with 4 eyes and plenty of roots. Replant, water, and enjoy!

Adapted in part from Peonies for the Home Landscape NCSU and Peonies Clemson University.

ABC....XYZ Gardening Vernacular

H is for Herbicide

Herbicides are chemicals used to kill undesirable plants. There are several types of herbicides and ways that each type of herbicide works. The end result is still the same-killing an undesirable plant. By knowing how a specific herbicide works, you will be able to select the proper herbicide for your situation.

Remember hand-pulling weeds is always an option! Especially in containers, small garden beds, or vegetable plots.

Safety: Always store new or unused herbicides in their original containers. Store away from children. On each label is safety information. This is provided so you can know how to safely handle the herbicide and what to do in case of an emergency. Read the label completely before applying herbicides or any type of pesticide. Do not let herbicides come into contact with your skin or eyes. The label will include information on required personal protective equipment needed when mixing, applying and cleaning up your sprayer. After you are done, be sure to change clothes and wash your skin. Wash clothes in a separate load in the washing machine. For more information on pesticide safety, visit NC Extension Gardener Handbook Appendix B <https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/extension-gardener-handbook/appendix-b-pesticide-safety>

Contact herbicides injure the part of the plant they touch when sprayed. If you miss the growth bud or other parts, those missed parts will not be killed or damaged. Contact herbicides can be selective and non-selective, but they do not kill any part of the plant that is underground. You can often see the result from the contact herbicide in a short period of time.

Systemic herbicides are absorbed by the foliage and moved throughout the vascular system of the plant. This allows the chemical to kill the plant into the root system. Systemic herbicides are slower to show visual results.

Selective herbicides kill some plants while not damaging others. Examples of this are herbicides used on lawns to kill the weeds. Chemicals have been developed that will kill specific weeds and let the turf grass continue to grow. The herbicide label will list what weeds it will kill and the application rate of the herbicide.

Non-selective herbicides kill or injure all plants. Examples of this type of chemical are glyphosate and glufosinate. Remember they will kill or damage any plant that they come in contact with, so be careful when applying this type of chemical.

Postemergence herbicides work to kill weeds that are already germinated. In the spring, many winter weeds are evident in lawns. These would be sprayed according to label directions to kill or minimize them in the turf. They could be prevented by applying at the correct time in the fall with a pre-emergent herbicide.

Pre-emergent herbicides keep weed seed from germinating. Knowing when to apply is important because once the weed seed is germinated, the chemical has no effect on the weed.

Herbicides can be helpful in managing weeds in the landscape, lawns and other areas. Be sure to read and follow label directions. The label is the law! By following label directions and ensuring you are applying the correct herbicide, you can minimize weeds.

Information on 65 Common Weeds added to NCSU Extension Gardener Plant Toolbox

Written by: Lucy Bradley, NCSU Urban Horticulture Professor and Extension Specialist

Many thanks to project coordinator Kira Chaloupka, student photographer Calla Veazie, Extension Specialist Joe Neal, Extension Agents Ashley Troth, Matt Jones, & Sam Marshall, Extension Master Gardener volunteers in Durham, Chatham and Haywood Counties as well as those serving on the Plant Toolbox team. They have done a tremendous amount of work identifying, photographing, and documenting weeds for the Extension Gardener Toolbox (plants.ces.ncsu.edu). Check out all the information and images that has been added on these 65 common weeds.

Winter Annual Weeds

(https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/find_a_plant/?plant_type_id=22&q=winter+annual)

Annual bluegrass, Annual Ryegrass, Asiatic hawkbeard, Bittercress, Carolina Geranium, Chickweed, Common Groundsel, Henbit, Horseweed, Lawn Burweed, Shepherd's purse, Sowthistle, Speedwell, Vetch

Summer Annual Weeds

(https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/find_a_plant/?plant_type_id=22&q=summer+annual)

Black medic, Carpetweed, Chamber Bitter, Cocklebur, Crabgrass, Foxtail, Garden Spurge, Goosegrass, Japanese stiltgrass, Prostrate Knotweed, Lambs quarter, Lespedeza, Mulberry weed, Pigweed, Purselane, Ragweed, Sida, Spotted Spurge, Virginia Copperleaf, Wild carrot

Perennial Weeds (https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/find_a_plant/?plant_type_id=22&q=perennial)

Aster, Frost, Bamboo, Bermudagrass, Clover, white, Common Wood sorrel, Curly dock, Dallas grass, Dandelions, Dogfennel, Dollarweed, English ivy, Florida betony, Garlic/Onion – wild, Ground ivy, Hedge bindweed, Japanese Honeysuckle, Johnsongrass, Mugwort, Nimblewill, Nutsedge, yellow, Nutsedge, purple, Orchard grass, Plantain, Poison ivy, Pokeweed, Smilax, Smilax, Smilax, Virginia buttonweed, Wild violet, Wisteria

Plants.ces.ncsu.edu

Key Components

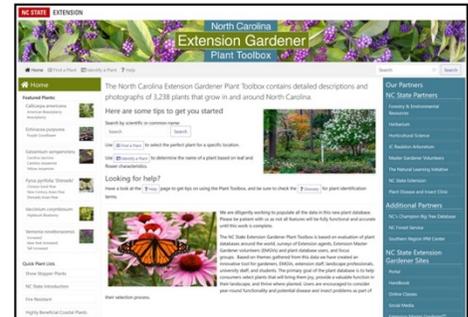
- Find a Plant
- Identify a Plant
- Gallery of Garden Designs

Photographs

- Botanical features
- Life cycle
- Seasonal interest

Learn

- Native Alternatives
- Better Adapted Options



Mourning Dove

Article and Photo Source: allaboutbirds.org/guide/mourning_dove

Mourning doves are common in North Carolina. You may have heard them when you are out and about. Follow this link for the coo of the mourning dove:

https://nas-national-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/moudov_1.cooampartialcoo_nyle_1_0.mp3

A graceful, slender-tailed, small-headed dove that's common across the continent. Mourning Doves perch on telephone wires and forage for seeds on the ground; their flight is fast and bullet straight. Their soft, drawn-out calls sound like laments. When taking off, their wings make a sharp whistling or whinnying.

Scatter seeds, particularly millet, on the ground or on platform feeders. Plant dense shrubs or evergreen trees in your yard to provide nesting sites. Keep your cats inside - birds that spend much of their time on the ground are particularly vulnerable to prowling cats.

During the breeding season, you might see three Mourning Doves flying in tight formation, one after another. This is a form of social display. Typically, the bird in the lead is the male of a mated pair. The second bird is an unmated male chasing his rival from the area where he hopes to nest. The third is the female of the mated pair, which seems to go along for the ride.



Spider Mites

Have you ever seen this speckled appearing damage on plants in your landscape? If so, you may have spider mites. Spider mites are a common insect pest in home landscapes.

Some interesting facts about spider mites:

- Spider Mites are not insects but arachnids. This is why if you use an insecticide on spider mites it will not kill them!
- All arachnids, including mites, have two main body parts and eight legs.
- The two-spotted spider mite can infest over 200 species of plants. Common plants from this list that you may have in your yard are azaleas, roses, lantana, marigolds, tomatoes, blackberry and strawberry.
- As you can see in the picture above, spider mites have caused many of the leaves to turn yellow, which will reduce the plants ability to photosynthesize. This is why the plant may begin to decline and may even die in very severe cases.
- Eggs overwinter on the bottom of leaves, making it especially important to control the spider mites before the end of the growing season.
- Spider mites love hot dry weather. This is why when temperatures are above 90 degrees they can reproduce in large numbers.



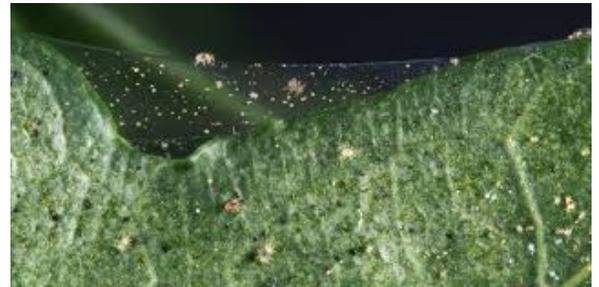
Whitney Cranshaw, Colorado State University, www.forestryimages.org

Spider Mite Damage

Spider mites have piercing-sucking mouthparts. They insert their needle-like mouthpart into the underside of the leaf, then suck out fluids to feed themselves. On plants you can see the areas as small dots, which become closer and closer together once the population increases.

Identify Spider Mites

It's easy to determine if you have spider mites. Simply hold a white sheet of paper or a paper plant under the leaves and shake the branch or a few leaves. Small specks should appear on the paper. If they start crawling around you will have found spider mites. Using your phone camera, you can magnify the insects to see them better. Another sign of spider mite is the stippling and webbing.



Cropwatch.unl.edu

Control Spider Mites

Always be on the watch for plants that are stressed. This can be from too little water, plants in the wrong place, or even overwatering.

Once you have identified spider mites, insecticidal soap and horticultural oil are natural and effective against spider mites. Additionally, they are not harmful to people, animals and nontarget insects. Both these products only kill the mites that they are sprayed on. Once sprayed, there is no residual chemical left to kill mites at a later date. Be sure to thoroughly spray the plants, both top and bottom. You will need to repeat the applications as indicated on the product label. Mix according to label directions.

Spider mites can be a problem but are easily identified and can be managed with less toxic options.

Quote

"A late summer garden has a tranquility found no other time of the year." – William F. Longgood

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