

The Clod-Hopper



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Gardeners of Wake County, Inc. — Raleigh, NC

September 2022

A Hardy Begonia—How Awesome Is That?

by Kathleen Thompson, President



What do you know about hardy begonias? Did you know there is such a plant? As is true about many plants in my garden, this plant has a story to tell. Just when most plants and flowers are looking tired and unhappy, these hardy begonias are shouting “look at me,” and rightfully so.

Hardy begonias (*Begonia grandis*) are herbaceous perennials that bloom now thru fall. A soft pink or white cyme (type of flower cluster) dangles in the softest breeze to attract attention. The plants grow 1 ½ to 2 feet tall, and according to articles online, they want moist, rich soil in shade to part sun. Mine, however, did not read that article and they thrive in heavy, dry, unamended soil under shade under trees with amazing results.

This story began about thirty years ago when gardening in North Carolina was new to me. We went to a small nursery and asked the owner for suggestions on plants that grow well here and she recommended these hardy begonias --- several times. Each time, I said no thank you. So we gathered a collection of other plants to try, and as we were checking out, she came over and said “here, you WILL like these!” And gave us two small pots that looked like pots with only dirt in them. The garden magic happened the next year when these begonias started to grow, then bloom and of course, she was right, we do like them---very much. They have favored us by filling bare spots where not much else will grow.



September at the GWC!

Raymond and Wanda Quinn will be our speakers on Tuesday, September 20th, presenting, "A Little about the American Daylily Society and Much about Windyhill Daylily Garden." The Quinns have built Windyhill Garden into a marvelous horticultural retreat with not only daylilies but other plants so as to offer year-round interest. It is a registered American Horticultural Society Display Garden. It also features hundreds of hummingbirds. The Quinns look forward to talking with our Club about their love of gardening and daylilies and also will be bringing some of their hybridized daylily plants to show off and share. This fascinating presentation begins about 7:30 PM. Those who want to be sure of getting a good seat, to say nothing about securing their fair share of scrumptious hors d'oeuvres and sparkling conversation, should plan on arriving at the JC Raulston Arboretum by 7:00. Come early! Stay late! You'll be glad you did.

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Club Officers and Committees

Board members

President: Kathleen Thompson

Vice President: Tom Packer

Secretary: Joanne Boone

Treasurer: Charlie Leverett

Immediate Past President: Paul Hoffman
sitting in for Ginny Parker temporarily

At-large board members: Kate Bartos, Jim
Shaloiko, Shay Campbell, Jim Swanson

Committee members

Activities Chair: Will Farmer, Reed & Chris-
tine Elliott (seed swap), Renee Engates
(refreshments), Mark Boone (picnic), Ginny
Parker (awards banquet)

Audit: Charles Gilliam, Kathy Moore, Reed
Elliott

Azalea Sale: Charlie Leverett

Beautification Awards: Laine Thomas

Club Awards: Paul Hoffman

Endowment Investment: Charles Gilliam

Friendship: Donna Farmer

Historical: Donna Farmer

Membership, Barbara Brown

Newsletter Editor: Reed Elliott

Nominating: Jim Moore

Programs: Christine Elliott

Projects: Sharon LaRusch, Lynn Swanson

Publicity: Charles Gilliam

Scholarship: Christine Elliott

Telephone: Johnny and Sherrill Johnson

Webmaster: Reed Elliott

Contact Us

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Our Club webpage is online at [https://
gardenersofwakecounty.weebly.com/](https://gardenersofwakecounty.weebly.com/)

A Hardy Begonia—How Awesome Is That?

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Hardy begonias are self-propagating, but not a garden thug. They produce bulblets at the leaf axils in autumn and drop them on the ground to produce more plants for next year. If there are too many plants, they are easy to pull out. The wing shaped leaves, typical of many begonias are dark green in front, with a deep red back that appears to be lighted with neon when the western sun shines on them from behind. The combination of the wispy flowers and colorful leaves create a stunning plant and an unexpected wow factor.



Also, what gardener wouldn't be happy with a plant that deer and rabbits leave alone? A hardy begonia is a garden treasure and one of the best plants that I never wanted to grow. Now I wouldn't be without it!



September Features GWC Presenters Raymond and Wanda Quinn of Windyhill Daylily Garden

by Tom Packer, Vice-President



Raymond and Wanda Quinn will be our speakers on Tuesday, September 20th, presenting, "A Little About the American Daylily Society and Much About Windyhill Daylily Garden."

The Quinns founded and operate Windyhill Daylily Garden in Fuquay-Varina. Raymond is a Garden and Exhibition Judge and the Regional Hybridizer Liaison, as well as the current Regional Director on the American Daylily Society Board. Wanda is a Garden Judge and past-President of the Raleigh Daylily Club and Region 15 Display Gardens Chair of the ADS for many years. Both are also daylily hybridizers

with Wanda focusing on small "Unusual Form" daylilies that can be incorporated into perennial beds and Raymond specializing on the daylily collectors garden. Both Raymond and Wanda have won many daylily related awards, especially hybridizing awards, Raymond with the "I'm So Vein" hybrid daylily and Wanda with her 'Designer Red' daylily.

Raymond and Wanda have built Windyhill Garden into a marvelous horticultural retreat with not only daylilies but other plants so as to offer year-round interest. It is a registered American Horticultural Society Display Garden. It also features hundreds of hummingbirds, with Wanda having gained the local title of "The Hummingbird Lady." The Quinns look forward to talking with our Club about their love of gardening



and daylilies and also will be bringing some of their hybridized daylily plants to show off and share.



This fascinating presentation begins about 7:30 PM on Tuesday, September 20th. Those who want to be sure of getting a good seat, to say nothing about securing their fair share of scrumptious hors d'oeuvres and sparkling conversation, should plan on arriving at the JC Raulston Arboretum by 7:00. Come early! Stay late! You'll be glad you did.

Summer's End at Joslin Garden

by Sharon LaRusch and Lynn Swanson, Projects Co-chairs



Rain dampened but couldn't stop our August workday at Joslin Garden. It also provided a great opportunity to gather and chat about the future of *Jeu de Paume*. We had some new volunteers including Nell's brother. We heard about Joslin from a different perspective.

The August workday was a wonderful display of a well-oiled machine! Lynn gave some instruction based on

the tasks for the day and our amazing group just knocked out task after task. We added more river rock and Paul brought us

some goldfish to grow as our project grows! A stubborn stump was no match for this crew!



One of the wonderful things about Joslins (other than Nell, Helen and Chris) is the autonomy and support they have given to our Club with the *Jeu de Paume* garden. We are so thankful for those that came out and the fellowship has been our biggest gift!

At our next Club meeting, Lynn and I would like to chat about what



lies ahead and how our Club can continue fostering this wonderful project.



P.S., Saturday, September 24th is our next date for Joslin – be sure to check the website for specifics and a map! Or, for more information contact sharonlarusch@gmail.com or chocolategardener@yahoo.com

New Members

The Gardeners of Wake County welcome anyone and everyone who loves gardens and gardening. This month we're happy to have added Marilyn Gist of Raleigh and Carol Breen of Holly Springs. Be sure to say "Hi and welcome" when you see them at our next meeting!

Club Awards

by Paul Hoffman, Past President

Everything that takes place in our Club happens through the actions of enthusiastic volunteers. Each December we set aside a time at the Award Banquet to recognize and say thank you to several people who have served the Club in important ways.

The Club constitution describes the criteria for making the following awards:

- Green Thumb Award - given for outstanding service from someone who has been a member less than two years
- Silver Trowel Award – given for an outstanding service from a Club member
 - Silver Vase Award – given as recognition for an exemplary individual service by a Club member
 - Lifetime Achievement Award – given to a member that has given the Club a great deal of service over a period of many years



We even give awards to non-members:

- Dogwood Award – given in appreciation to a non-member who has given service to the Club
- Beautification Award – given to an individual or organization for outstanding landscaping and beautification in our country

Individual award recipients for 2021 were:

- Dogwood Award – Mei Mei Ma
- Green Thumb Award – Tom Packer
- Silver Trowel Award – Hans and Hallie Michel and Rachel Strauss
- Silver Vase Award – Charlie Leverett
- Lifetime Achievement Award – Mac Williamson



This article serves as an announcement that the nominating process for choosing the 2022 honorees is underway. You can participate in this process by volunteering to be on the awards committee and/or by submitting your suggestions for deserving award recipients to Kathleen or to the committee chair, Paul Hoffman.

My Corner of the Garden

by Reed Elliott, Editor

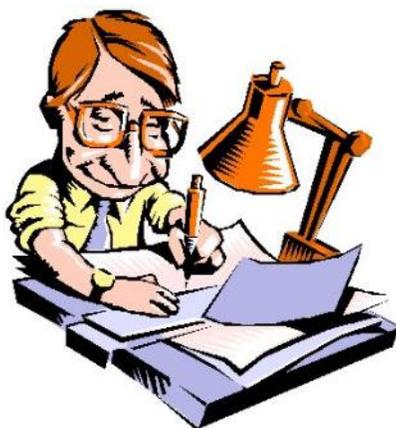
Saying that we live and garden in deer country would be an understatement. They are everywhere - all the time. So in moments when we are less than vigilant, plenty of our plants and trees fall victim to snacking and rutting deer. Yet with increased pressure from urban sprawl and an increasing deer population, anyone who gardens in the middle of any city anywhere in North America has likely experienced some deer damage. As their wildlife habitat disappears, deer are not very shy about browsing in our neighborhoods.



The only nearly bullet-proof option for keeping out deer is a fence. Deer are prolific jumpers, but they're more inclined to crawl under than leap over. So, a deer-proof fence needs to be tall (over 8'). If you have a large space to protect, that can be cost-prohibitive. It's also not the most attractive solution. A more attractive, less expensive option is to fence smaller defined areas like a raised bed garden. In such cases, even a lower, 4 ft. fence is likely to be adequate to keep deer out because deer don't have good depth perception. They avoid jumping into crowded, confined areas or into places where they can't perceive a clear landing area.

While small limited amounts of fencing can protect part of a garden, other plants in the landscape are open for business to the hungry local deer population. Protect those plants using repellent products. Repellents can be a good option if your landscape is receiving some but not heavy deer damage. Diligent application is key to success. This management approach is only truly effective when applied regularly and to all new growth. It's best to begin using repellents just as plants are budding out in spring. It protects the fresh new growth deer particularly love, but it can also signal to the deer that your plants don't taste good and discourage their returning later. That said, repellent products need to be applied regularly to remain effective, and you should be prepared to reapply every time it rains. Application can be time-consuming and expensive, so you might opt to use this approach only if the area is small enough to realistically manage or on just the plants which are most at risk or most valuable to you.

So which deer repellents work? Research has shown that, while odor repellents tend not to work, taste repellents can be very effective. Any product with egg solids, blood, hot pepper, or capsaicin listed as an ingredient is your best choice. Some repellents contain both eggs and hot pepper or capsaicin, and those work particularly well. Never underestimate how persistent and adaptive deer are. If they are hungry enough, they will acclimate to the taste of the repellent, so it's a good idea to alternate different products to keep the deer "on their toes."



Another creative approach that can keep deer from inflicting much damage in your garden is choosing the right plants and putting them in strategic locations to protect the rest of your property. Placing deer-resistant plants on the exterior of a garden bed can turn deer off and keep them from discovering the plants they love - like tulip blooms or hosta - in the interior of a bed. Is there a particular path through your landscape that you've noticed deer tend to travel? Try using deer resistant plants near their typical point of entry. It can encourage the intruders to move on to more appealing plants elsewhere. Just remember that there are lots of deer-resistant plant options, but there is no such thing as a deer-proof plant. When a deer is hungry enough, it will eat just about anything. So, we sometimes have to resolve ourselves to the inevitability that some damage will occur.