

Welcome to Garden Happy!

2015 Course Schedule

Course # 1 - The Essentials: All about Soil & Pruning *This course is a PREREQUISITE to all other classes. No new students will be enrolled after this class.*

Class dates: Feb 28th (Sat), March 1st, 4th, & 8th (Sun, Wed, Sun) @ 2-5 pm

Soil Basics: (1 hour 30 minutes) Organic gardening is a process, not a product, and it all starts with the soil. This class is a prerequisite to ALL other classes. You will learn the importance of soil, why pH matters, how to take a soil test, how to create new planting beds and rejuvenate existing ones, organic soil amendments, nutrient balance, and the role of microorganisms.

Pruning guidelines & demonstration: (1 hour 30 minutes) Bad pruning is the #1 mistake of homeowners and landscapers alike. Good pruning can transform your landscape into a thing of beauty. Improper pruning, including pruning at the wrong time, can destroy bloom buds, disfigure plants, invite disease, and do permanent damage to an otherwise healthy plant. Whether you do it yourself or hire it out, it is important to know what to do!

Instruction will include an overview of essential tools, and pruning demonstrations of roses, nandina, conifers, azaleas, camellias, spirea, weigelia, clematis, grasses, fruits and more. (If you don't know what plants you have, you may recognize them when you see them in my landscape.)

Course # 2 - Organic Vegetable Gardening, Fabulous Flowers from Seed, Controlling Furry Pests

Class dates: March 25th, 28th, 29th (Wed, Sat, Sun) @ 2-5pm

There are beautiful ways to grow vegetables and herbs in your home landscape. You will learn about potted gardens, raised beds, and veggies that make a beautiful addition to your flower border.

What to Plant Now and How: Discussion & demonstrations (2 1/2 hours)

- **Spring veggies, herbs and flowers** including asparagus (a beautiful, edible perennial), potatoes, onions, lettuce, arugula, beets, peas, spinach, parsley, cilantro, dill, edible flowers and more.
- Planting schedules for spring, summer, fall.
- When and how to sow seeds vs planting seedlings.
- Where to buy seed, transplants, plant supports and fertilizers.
- How to read a seed catalog and a seed packet.
- What is N-P-K?
- The various types of organic fertilizers and pros/cons of synthetic fertilizers.
- Essential tools that make gardening easier.
- Got Shade? How about mushrooms?
- **How to plan for your Summer garden**, including veggies and flowers from seed. (Don't rush, our average last frost date is April 15th.)

Deterring furry pests in the garden: Deer, rabbits, moles & voles – if you plant it they will come! Gardening can be an exercise in futility if you do not have the “varmints” under control. (30 minutes) *I will have organic Deer & Rabbit repellent available for sale at this class.*

Course #3 - Shade Gardening & Container Gardening

Class dates: April 18th, 19th & 22nd (Sat, Sun, Wed) @ 2-5pm

Shade gardening ... is not for sissies! It means trying to grow things in a challenging environment. There are usually trees providing the shade so the ground is often root bound and dry as a bone. Then of course there is the lack of sun, an essential ingredient for photosynthesis! I will show you plants that thrive in this environment and discuss how to grow them successfully. (1 hour 30 min)

Annuals, perennials, biennials, bulbs and corms (30 minutes) – what’s the difference? The most reliable bloomers and when to plant them.

Container Gardening (1 hour)

Guidelines for design, container choices, plants for sun or shade, annuals, perennials & vegetables for pots, potted water gardens, evergreen or not.

Course # 4 – The “I Love Plants” Class – Learn about many varieties of shrubs and trees, that take you far beyond the 20 common plants you find in the average landscape.

Class dates: May 6th, 9th, 10th (Wed, Sat, Sun) @ 2-5pm

This Interactive outdoor walk (2 ½ hours) will focus on how different **trees & shrubs** can be used to create a low-maintenance landscape with beauty and color. You will see how plants look at maturity (vs. in a nursery pot) so you understand their size and features. We will discuss individual plants and various cultivars that are available.

Choosing "the best" plant depends on its requirements for light, water, and soil (including pH), and whether it will grow to be the right size, shape and color to fit your landscape design. Shade lovers will wilt and burn in the sun and require lots more water. Sun lovers get leggy and lose their color in shade, attract bugs and disease.

You will learn:

- How to read a nursery plant tag.
- Plants that deer don't like.
- Plants for screening and “evergreening” your property.
- Shrubs for sun and shade.
- Shrubs that flower in different seasons
- Choosing plants for year-round interest (bark, structure, leaf color, texture...)
- Plants as “structure” in the landscape
- A review of your soil test results that should have come back after Course #1.

Demonstration: (1/2 hour) **The right way to plant shrubs and trees** for successful growth, even those sometimes fussy azalea and rhododendron. We will address an array of misconceptions about planting techniques. You may be very surprised!

Course #5 – Spring Clean Up, Seed Saving & Bug Identification, plus Growing Fruits in your Home Landscape

Class dates: June 3rd, 6th & 7th (Wed, Sat, Sun) @ 2-5pm

Garden Maintenance - After the explosion of spring blooms, it is time to tidy up! This class will cover pruning and deadheading of spring blooming shrubs and perennials, weed and disease control, bug identification and discussion of what to do about the bad guys & how to attract more good ones! We will also discuss “preemptive pruning” of perennials to control size and help them hold up their heavy summer blooms. (1 hour)

Seed Saving – It is time to collect seeds from spring bloomers to sow now or save for next year. Your garden is producing much more seed than you will find in 100 ordinary seed packets! I will show you how to collect seeds, dry them, and plant them for more blooms next year. (30 minutes)

The easiest, low maintenance FRUITS that are beautiful in your home landscape and small enough to fit anywhere: blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, figs, Japanese persimmons and more. (1 ½ hours)

Bonus Workshop - Preserving the Harvest: Drying, Canning, Making Jam

Class Date: July 15th, 18th, 19th (Wed, Sat, Sun) 2-5 pm - In my Kitchen!

Now that you have been enormously successful growing organic tomatoes, beans, cucumbers & berries, how do you safely preserve the overflow? This is a 2 hour class in my kitchen showing you some easy & delicious ways to dry or can tomatoes, pickle beans or cukes, and make jam. I'll share recipes and tastings for my tomato tapenade, sweet basil dressing, pestos, and peach & habanero preserve.

Course #6 – Cut Flower Workshop & Sun Perennials

Class dates: August 1st, 5th, 8th & 12th (Sat, Wed, Sat, Wed) @ **9am-noon**

Note that there are 4 dates you may choose from for this class. This is so you can invite friends who are not part of the gardening program. The course fee for guests is \$50. This is a lot of fun to share!

These are the only MORNING classes in the gardening program. The weather will be warm. We will be in the garden 9 am - 10:30, and then move into my air-conditioned workshop for flower arranging.

Reliable perennials for Sun (1 hour) Spend your money wisely on deer proof, heat/cold tolerant, disease resistant, long blooming, and long-lived perennials. You may also want to know which are magnets for butterflies and hummingbirds. The right choices make gardening very satisfying.

The Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia goldsturm*) is a bullet-proof perennial, but a cut stem lasts only a day in a vase! A hydrangea bloom will wilt if not cut at the proper state of growth and conditioned well before arranging. The best flowers to grow for fresh arrangements are not always what you expect.

I will show you what to grow, how to grow it, and how to treat the cut flower after it comes out of the garden to extend its vase life. You will see a wide variety of flowering shrubs, perennials and annuals that you can use to decorate your home as well as your garden.

Flower Arranging is the last step. This is so much fun! You will be surrounded by buckets of fresh cut flowers and can take home a huge bouquet or several (FREE with the class)!

Note: You may order fresh cut flower arrangements from my garden anytime from May through December.

Course #7 – Plant Propagation Workshop & Maintaining the Late Summer Garden

Class dates: September 9th, 12th, & 13th @ 2-5 pm (Wed, Sat, Sun)

It takes some effort to keep your garden looking good through the high temperatures of July and August. Experienced gardeners rarely walk into the garden without gloves and pruners in hand. There are entire books written on caring for perennial gardens because plants are just different. If you prune improperly you will lose the blooms for the rest of the season, others need drastic measures. I will show you how to rejuvenate your plants for a more beautiful fall. (1 hour)

Hands-on plant propagation workshop: Bring your gloves and lots of Zip-loc sandwich bags! This hands-on session will cover an array of propagation techniques including making new plants from seeds, bulb divisions, stem cuttings, and layering. I will also demonstrate dividing and transplanting perennials. You will take home lots of fool-proof flower seeds and cuttings to grow in your garden. (2 hours)

Course #8 - The Fall and Winter Garden & Garden Design Principles and Strategies

Class dates: October 10th, 11th & 14th @ 2-5pm (Sat, Sun & Wed)

Garden Design Principles Fall is the perfect time to look around your garden with a critical eye. The 'bones' of your garden can be seen when the leaves have fallen and the perennials disappear for the winter. *This is an interactive garden walk-about to examine WHY a garden scene is pleasing to the eye.* Looking at specific components of the scene will uncover ideas that you can use in your own landscape design.

The Fall & Winter Garden The Piedmont Triad is usually blessed with wonderful autumn leaf color. Make sure your garden has even more with fabulous Japanese maples, fall blooming camellias, asters, 6 foot tall ginger, helianthus, grasses, sedum and more. You will learn about keeping your garden beautiful through winter with evergreens, berries, colorful bark, bulbs, stone and interesting textures.

Little tasks to do in fall: Harvesting the last of your herbs before frost, planting garlic & spinach, sowing seeds for spring flowers, and gathering leaves for great compost. Learn about frost protection to make the last of your fall vegetables hold weeks longer through the cold.

MULCH: Why it is beneficial, which is best for different areas of the garden, and how much to apply. So many choices: shredded or chips? Hardwood or pine? Straw or bark? Synthetic mulches? (30 minutes)

Your continuing education will include invitations to tour several Private Local Gardens and Special Local Nurseries. Details will be emailed to registered students as tour dates are confirmed. Please also refer to the COURSE DETAILS page for a list of what is included with EVERY class.