



"Once upon a time, when women were birds, there was the simple understanding that to sing at dawn and to sing at dusk was to heal the world through joy.

The birds still remember what we have forgotten—that the world is meant to be celebrated."

- Terry Tempest Williams

July-August 2024

Summer in the Garden—Grasshoppers are on the Wane

In the first week of August, the monsoon rains have come, and we are seeing fewer voracious grasshoppers now.

Plants that survived the huge wave of grasshoppers are growing with renewed vigor and the garden looks much better than it did in mid-July. Congratulations to the determined gardeners who rigged up secure row covers to deter grasshoppers – your efforts are really paying off!

Thank you to everyone who persevered through the heat and kept watering and replanting. Those who have been gardening here for some time know that each year brings its own characteristics. Even the park around the garden, and its resident wildlife, change from year to year.

We're glad that so many of our new gardeners have been persistent and now enjoying rewards for all their effort.

Take a walk around the garden. Tomatoes, squash, pumpkins and cucumbers are thriving. Some gardeners are having very good success with beans, artichokes, eggplant and peppers, and it seems that strawberries are starting to show up on more plots each year. See if you can spot the plots where green artichokes, Jerusalem artichokes, eggplant, Iceland poppies and red amaranth are thriving.

Did It Rain at the Garden Today?

The Weather Underground has a weather station near the garden which reports recent rainfall and provides local forecasts. It is an easy site to use, and can be accessed at: <https://bit.ly/3wHdxjA>

Scroll down to the list of "Nearby Weather Stations" and choose the station called "Lower Skyway (#60).



She's Busting Grasshoppers!

Chloe Lomphey brought her shop vacuum to the garden in June for a radical, and nicely organic, approach to reducing the grasshopper population on her plot. Gardeners used pepper and garlic sprays, Neem, Pyrethrin, Diatomaceous Earth and finally, row covers to protect plants from the plague of grasshoppers that descended on Bear Creek Park.

They also put out molasses and water traps and some used small birdbaths to coax more grasshopper-eating birds to visit their plots.

Donating to the Zoo, Silver Key

Thank you to all the gardeners who are getting into the weekly swing of donating extra vegetables when the Zoo picks up on Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. and Silver Key picks up on Saturdays at 10:00 a.m.

Both organizations appreciate produce that is in good condition and not damaged, dirty or too overripe. Place donations by the truck gate no earlier than 7 p.m. on the night before the pickup, and preferably on the morning of pickup. Leafy greens will hold up best if placed in a plastic bag and kept out of the sun.

Zoo. Please take time to get acquainted with the Zoo signs near the garden gates that tell which items are most

Notes for Gardeners

Deadline to Spread Straw - July 31.

Thank you to everyone who finished spreading their straw by the deadline so that it has time to start breaking down before it is tilled under after the garden closes. Bales of straw not spread out by August 1 must be removed from the garden. Straw mulch keeps the soil surface cooler on hot days, supporting healthy growth of plants. Vegetable plants growing in bare dirt or surrounded by landscape fabric are subjected to a high level of radiant heat in the summer.

Leaping Weeds! Gardeners must keep their aisles and paths around their plots clear of weeds. This is part of managing your plot and is not considered volunteer work. Contact BCGA if there are problem areas that need to be addressed

(Continued on page 2)

Garden Picnic—August 11



On Sunday, August 11, gardeners, their families and their helpers are invited to a Potluck Picnic at the Gold Hill Mesa Community Center, 142 South Raven Mine Drive, near the garden.

The Potluck will begin at 12:30 p.m. This is a great opportunity to meet other gardeners and show off your summer vegetables in the potluck dishes.

Please bring a main dish AND a salad or dessert to share. BCGA will provide plates, cups, utensils, napkins and lemonade. (Alcohol is not permitted at this event.)

Please RSVP by sending an email to hello@bearcreekgardens.org if you plan to attend the potluck. RSVPs should be received by Friday, August 9 so that organizers know how many people will be coming.

(Continued on page 2)

Garden Calendar

August 11 — Summer Potluck — Gold Hill Mesa Community Center 142 South Raven Mine Drive—12:30—3:00 p.m.

August 17 — Workday 7 a.m.—Noon

August 24 — Dahlia Farm Visit — See article on this page.

September 21 — Workday — 7 a.m.—Noon

September 28 — Workday — Hours TBD

October 5 and 6 — Workdays — Hours TBD

October 12— Garden Closes at 4:00 p.m.

October 19— BCGA Annual Meeting of Members — Cheyenne Mountain Library, 1785 South 8th Street, 2:00—3:00 p.m.

Donating to Zoo, Silver Key

(Continued from page 1)

appreciated by the animals. Kay Gray, who has been managing our donation program since the 1990s, is a gardener and also a docent at the Zoo. She recently introduced us to Hunter Turner, the new Commissary Supervisor at the Zoo.

Hunter says that zucchini and lettuce are among the favorite items we donate, so don't let these prolific vegetables go to waste on your plot.

Silver Key. A representative from Silver Key picks up produce on Saturdays and takes it immediately to the refrigerated coolers at the Silver Key location, 1655 South Murray Boulevard. It is sorted and cleaned and offered to clients at a Monday morning onsite market. Some of it goes into the kitchen to be used in the Meals on Wheels program.

Bear Creek Garden Association

BCGA runs the Charmaine Nymann Community Garden (CNCG) located in Bear Creek Regional Park in Colorado Springs, Colorado. It is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt nonprofit corporation.

Individuals can rent plots to grow vegetables for personal use and for donation to friends and charities.

Contact: Todd Hegert (719) 329-8873

Email: hello@bearcreekgardens.org

Website: www.bearcreekgardens.org

Facebook:

Bear Creek Garden Association

Notes for Gardeners

(Continued from page 1)

in your part of the garden. Never throw any weeds over the garden fence into the area maintained by the Parks workers. Gardeners can either scatter the weeds on the plot as mulch or bag them and take them home for disposal. Do not pile them on the plot, because compost piles are not permitted. Do your neighbors a favor by not letting weeds go to seed on your plot.

Gardeners with plots along the fence must keep the fence line clear of weeds and must also clear weeds down to bare dirt for one foot outside the fence line. Beyond that point, the Parks Department mower will mow the weeds. In addition to special responsibilities, the fence plots come with special privileges. Gardeners can plant right up to the fence and may plant perennials such as rhubarb that die back in winter along the fence where the tiller will not disturb them. They can also train plants to climb up the fence in the summertime.

Lock the Gates. Please be diligent about locking the gate behind you immediately when you go in or out from now until the garden closes. You may bring in a visitor, but do not let other non-gardeners into the garden. Protect your vegetables and those grown by your neighbors from theft.

Soil Amendment in the Fall. For many years, BCGA has encouraged gardeners to amend their soil in the fall with Don's Garden Mix, a mixture of compost and manure that BCGA purchases in bulk from Don's Garden Shop. While use of Garden Mix is encouraged, it is not required. Gardeners will have an opportunity to place orders and pay for Garden Mix in September and it will be delivered shortly before the garden closes.



Dumpsters. Large dumpsters will be placed by the garden gates in the north parking lot on Labor Day weekend and they will remain in place until the garden closes on October 12. They are emptied two to three times a week as they fill up with garden refuse.

Invitation to Visit Dahlia Farm

FAMILY DAY FARMING & RANCHING

WESTERN MUSEUM OF MINING & INDUSTRY
225 NORTH GATE BLVD., COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80921
719.488.0880 | WMMI.ORG

SATURDAY, AUGUST 24, 10AM-3PM

FARMING & RANCHING EXHIBITS, HAYRIDES, GOLD PANNING, STAMP MILL OPERATION, BLACKSMITH, AND MACHINE DEMOS.

JOINING US:

- GINGERSNAP RESCUE RANCH
- DIANNES DAHLIAS
- OUR RED BARN RANCH
- PALMER LAND CONSERVANCY
- HERITAGE BELLE FARMS
- MANITOU SPRINGS SEED LIBRARY
- TWIG & BERRY DYES
- PIKES PEAK BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION
- SMOKEY THE PIG FOOD TRUCK

\$5 PER CAR FOR ALL OUTSIDE EVENTS
MUSEUM MEMBERS COMPLIMENTARY
*REGULAR ADMISSION APPLIES FOR THE MUSEUM

BCGA gardener Dianne Reitan, who discovered a passion for dahlias by growing them on her plot, now has established her own flower farm, "Dianne's Dahlias", located at the Western Museum of Mining and Industry, 225 Northgate Boulevard, just east of I-25.

Dianne has invited our gardeners to come to a Farming and Ranching Family Day at the Museum on Saturday, August 24 from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Visitors will have a chance to visit the hoop houses where Dianne and her husband, Dave, are growing 800 dahlia plants this year. She will be selling dahlias that weekend.

The event will also feature tours of the Museum, as well as displays by Gingersnap Rescue Ranch, Heritage Belle Farms, Manitou Springs Seed Library, Twig & Berry Dyes, Palmer Land Conservancy and the Pikes Peak Beekeepers Association. The Smokey the Pig Food Truck will be selling barbeque sandwiches as well. The cost is \$5 per car for outside events. Museum admission is separate and ranges from \$7 to \$12 (child to adult).

Dianne also sells her dahlias at the Farmers Market that is held every Monday and Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. at the Museum from now to October.

Websites:

Western Museum:

www.wmmi.org

Dianne's Dahlias:

<https://diannedahlias.com/>

StoryCorps Interview Features Film, Community Garden

StoryCorps, an independent nonprofit program of National Public Radio (NPR), has been recording heartwarming personal stories for over twenty years. We currently hear short segments of these stories featured on our local NPR station in Colorado Springs every week. When the StoryCorps recording van came to Colorado Springs in June of 2023, it provided an opportunity to tell the following story about our community garden.

First, a little background:

"A Garden Experience" is a 28 minute film about the Charmaine Nymann Community Garden that was created by Colorado Springs filmmakers Nancy Bentley and John Atkinson. They spent two years collecting film footage by visiting the garden, making friends with the gardeners and interviewing them, attending potlucks and board meetings, setting up a time-lapse camera to photograph the bean plants growing on Larry Booth's plot, and even flying a drone with a video camera over Bear Creek Park to capture footage of the sleeping garden in winter and the tiller turning the soil in early spring.

They collected so much good material that it was quite a challenge to edit it down to a half-hour film. They also engaged local musician and composer George Ulrich to provide charming, original vegetable-themed music for the film.



"A Garden Experience" was released in the fall of 2018. It was shown for the first time at a celebration at the Bear Creek Nature Center for an audience of gardeners, their families, Char Nymann's family and other friends of the garden.



Nancy Bentley, John Atkinson and Karen Stith at the StoryCorps Van

Avid gardeners themselves, Nancy and John made the film at no charge to BCGA, as a gift to the garden. It can be viewed by clicking the link on the home page of the BCGA website: www.bearcreekgardens.org.



When the National Public Radio (NPR) StoryCorps van came to Colorado Springs for the month of June in 2023 to record local stories, veteran gardener and BCGA board member Karen Stith asked Nancy and John if she could do a StoryCorps interview with them about the making of the film. They insisted that they instead wanted to interview her about the garden. A compromise was reached and they interviewed each other.

The 37 minute interview has now been catalogued and stored permanently in the StoryCorps archive at the Library of Congress. Listen to it by using this link: <https://bit.ly/3YBF5rU>

StoryCorps is committed to the idea that everyone has an important story to tell and that everyone's story matters. Since its founding in 2003, StoryCorps has helped nearly 700,000 people across the country to have meaningful conversations about their lives.

These recordings are collected in the U.S. Library of Congress and in the StoryCorps online Archive which is now the largest single collection of human voices ever gathered.

The StoryCorps website and Archive are fascinating. Read about the work StoryCorps does at www.storycorps.org and enjoy other stories in the Archive at <https://archive.storycorps.org/>

Randy and Rose Recommend...

Veteran gardeners Randy Rickey and Rose Bergles both recommend using pyrethrin, an organic plant-based spray, to deter grasshoppers. Randy uses Bonide brand pyrethrin, available through Amazon. He also recommends Natural Pyrethrin Concentrate, available online from WalMart.

Rose uses PyGanic pyrethrin spray, available through Amazon. She combined it with some Fels Naptha soap and Texas Pete Hot Sauce.

Both Randy and Rose warn gardeners that they must never use any product containing "permethrin" which is a synthetic rather than organic substance. It is much stronger and not safe for use in a vegetable garden. Permethrin is not permitted in our community garden.

CSU Extension Classes: Salsa and Jams — Master Gardener Program

These upcoming events at the Colorado State University Extension office for El Paso County fit right into our garden harvest season. The Salsa Class will be on Thursday, August 29th at Noon and The Jam Class is available twice, Monday, October 21 at 5:15 p.m. and Wednesday, October 23 at Noon. The classes are popular, so it's a good idea to sign up soon. See: <https://bit.ly/3xrlWFT>

CSU Extension offers a wealth of garden and household information online, maintains a hotline run by its Master Gardeners to answer garden questions, and teaches a wide variety of public classes year round.

The Master Gardener certification program begins in the fall each year and is taught through the Extension Office. See: <https://elpaso.extension.colostate.edu/>



Purslane, that glossy green carpet, is all over the garden this year. It loves wet soil, spreads by producing abundant seeds and is easy to pull. It is nutritious and edible, and will add a huge boost of Vitamin C to a salad or a smoothie, with a lemony, tangy flavor that's reminiscent of sorrel. It's a good substitute for watercress, spinach and arugula. Known in Spanish as *Verdolaga*, it is frequently used in Mexican/Southwestern dishes.