



Aphids...Love them and Manage Them!

Aphids have real value in the garden and they are not that hard to manage. Here's a great article by Mikl Brawner in the April newsletter from Harlequin Gardens in Boulder:

<https://harlequingardens.com/aphids/>

May—June 2025

Straw Ordering — The Deadline is Friday, May 30

Use of straw mulch in the garden to keep moisture in the soil and discourage weeds is strongly recommended.

When the straw is tilled into the soil in the fall, this additional organic matter lightens and enriches the soil. There is a significant difference in the way the county's tiller digs penetrates the soil on plots that have been regularly amended with organic matter and those that have not.

Gardeners are not required to order straw but it is highly recommended. Place your order on the garden website at a price of \$12 per bale, and it will be delivered to the BCGA plot located by the Truck Gate around the end of the first week in June.

Order straw by using the link in the email sent to all gardeners on May 21.

The recommended amount is one bale per half plot and two bales per full plot. Some gardeners prefer to mulch more heavily with straw, and up to two bales per half plot or four bales per full plot are allowed.



A huge load of straw arriving at the truck gate last spring. A worker from Bartlett's Hay and Feed is up on top of the bales.

Weed barrier fabric is permitted in the garden, but gardeners should consider the fact that soil organisms and the soil itself function much better under a straw mulch which allows air to get to the soil, keeps the soil cool in the heat of summer and decomposes into the soil in the end.

Planning for Your Vacation

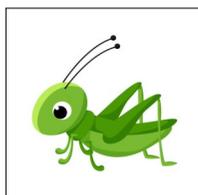
Please make arrangements in advance to make sure your plot is watered if you are going to be out of town this summer. Do not expect board members to find someone to water for you.

Gardeners often help each other with this and provide each other with vacation dates well in advance. It is also OK to give your key to a friend who is willing to take care of watering while you are away, but you must make sure that they know where your plot is and how important it is to water deeply. Make sure they know that hoses must be disconnected and stored properly, and that the garden gates must be kept locked.

Be aware that friends who are not registered can not do garden work on your plot while you are out of town.

Please let BCGA know if a friend will be watering for you (provide name and phone number) by sending an email to helo@bearcreekgardens.org before you leave town. A person who is just watering does not need to register as a helper.

GRRRR...asshoppers!



Grasshoppers were a significant problem throughout Colorado Springs and in the community garden last summer. With a grasshopper-pocalypse going on all over Bear Creek Park, killing the ones on your plot was almost pointless.

Gardeners had some success in excluding grasshoppers from their plants by setting up hoops covered with fairly sturdy fabric which was carefully secured down into the soil at the edges. They also were able to repel grasshop-

Notes for New Gardeners

We're off to a great start! There are currently 144 plot owners, of whom 48 are new gardeners, and there are 13 people on the waiting list to get a plot. Gardeners must begin work on a plot by June 1, after which time an untouched plot may be assigned to someone else. However, your whole plot does not need to be planted by June 1

Setbacks/Paths. Be sure that you have pulled your plot boundary in by one foot where it touches another plot in order to create a two foot path between the plots. Make a berm at the edge of that two-foot wide path to keep water from running out of your plot.

Berms Across Aisles. Please help to maintain the berms that run north-south across the main aisles to keep rainwater from rushing to the east in rainstorms.

Faucets/Hoses. Disconnect your hose and lay it along the edge of your plot or inside the plot before leaving the garden. If there is a leak at the faucet and/or at the nozzle, check to be sure that there is a flexible washer in place to provide a good seal. With age, washers become brittle and can even drop out of the hose fitting. If you feel that the leak is coming from the faucet itself, send an email to BCGA to report the leak.

Water Generously. When plants fail to thrive, the cause may be shallow watering that does not get the water down to where the roots are. Stick your finger into the soil after watering to see how far the water has penetrated. Remember that the Watering Rule (no watering between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.) has been suspended again this year. You can water at any time of day, but do keep in mind that morning and evening are best because water is lost to rapid evaporation in the heat of the day.

Lock Your Car. Every time you walk away from it, make sure your car is locked. Theft happens.

Keep Your Key With You. Until June 15th, gates are closed but not locked while gardeners are working. The last

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued on page 2)

Garden Calendar

May 17 — Garden Workday. 8:00 a.m. — 12:00 Noon. Bring your own tools.

May 24 — BCGA Plant and Tool Sale
For BCGA Gardeners only. 8:30 — 11:30 a.m. at the garden.

May 30—Deadline for ordering straw

June 6 — Probable straw delivery date

June 15 — Start locking gates. Gates must be locked at all times from June 15 until the garden closes in October.

June 21 — Garden Workday 8:00 a.m. — 12:00 Noon. Bring your own tools.

July 12 — BCGA Summer Garden Class with Rose Bergles at the Pavilion near the garden 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.



Did It Rain at the Garden Today?

There is a Weather Underground station just southwest of the garden on Andromeda which reports recent rainfall and provides local forecasts. It is an easy site to use, and can be accessed at:

<https://bit.ly/3SIGY29> Bill Harmon has found that the reporting on this site matches the rain gauges at the garden.

Weather Underground is a commercial weather service providing real-time weather information over the internet. In addition to feeds from the National Weather Service (NWS) it uses observations from members with automated personal weather stations. There are over 250,000 of these personal weather stations all over the world.

Plant an Extra Row

Please plant a little extra on your plot to give back to your community. Silver Key and the Zoo will start picking up donations in July. Kay Gray, who manages our relationship with the Zoo, will post on the fence a list of what the commissary can use and which animals prefer which vegetables. You could also plant flowers to support our pollinators. Here's an article on them: <https://bit.ly/3ZA1G7Y>

Rose's Summer Class

Last summer Rose Bergles, assisted by Marie Poyzer and Justin Zabor, taught a July class on summer planting of crops that mature quickly in late summer and early fall, tips on insect control and making pickles. She's planning to do a class again this year. Stay tuned.

FOX Garden Tour—June 28-29

The Friends of Extension (FOX) Garden Tour will take place on June 28-29 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at homes in the Brigate and Old Farm Neighborhoods in northeast Colorado Springs.

This is a fundraiser for the CSU County Extension program. Colorado Master Gardeners will be on hand at all locations to answer questions. See the website at <https://extensionfriends.org/> for more information and an opportunity to purchase tickets (\$25). Our community garden was on the FOX Tour in 2019.



The Bear Creek Garden Association participates in the King Soopers Community Rewards program. If you have a King Soopers loyalty (discount) card, you can link it to BCGA to help raise funds for the garden, and it costs you nothing to support the garden. Here's how:

If you don't already have one, get a discount card from the service desk at the store. Go online to www.kingsoopers.com and set up your personal account.

Go to "King Soopers Community Rewards" and [link your card to Bear Creek Garden Association](#) (organization [TI 166](#)).

Every time you use your card to get discounts at the checkout your purchase counts toward the quarterly checks that BCGA receives from King Soopers.

What an easy fundraiser! This supports our ongoing weed management program with El Paso County and also helps us keep plot fees low.

Notes for New Gardeners

(Continued from page 1)

gardener to leave an area must lock the gate. After June 15th the gates are kept locked at all times. Get in the habit of having your key in your pocket so that you do not ever get locked in.

Weeds. Get 'em while they are little! Cooperate with your neighbors to keep aisles, water posts and paths between plots free of weeds. Do not permit weeds or other plants to grow on your berms. Weeds that have been pulled can be scattered on your plot as mulch or you may bag them and take them home for disposal. Do not put them in the aisles or throw them over the fence.

Dumpsters will be provided in the fall for the major garden cleanup.

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 Page:

Bear Creek Garden Association

GRRRR....asshoppers!

(Continued from page 1)

pers by spraying plants with various garlic and hot pepper sprays and Safer liquid soap or coating plants with a light kaolin clay spray. Some felt that diatomaceous earth sprinkled on and around plants was helpful.

Some gardeners noted that their squash, strawberries, peppers and tomatoes suffered little or no damage while kale, lettuce, chard, onions and herbs were hit hard by the grasshoppers. The plague diminished by mid-summer and gardeners who had replanted some varieties of vegetables had a very good harvest. Keep in mind, too, that grasshoppers are consumed by many natural predators including wasps and birds.

Rick's Garden Center and other garden centers are currently selling packages of baited grain labeled "Eco-Bran for Grasshoppers" which will kill a grasshopper or any other insect or bird that eats it. The grain is coated with carbaryl, a chemical insecticide often sold under the trade name "Sevin". Carbaryl and similar insecticides are absolutely prohibited in our organic garden.

An article in the April 2025 issue of the Horticulture Newsletter published by the Colorado State University El Paso County Extension office provides good information on grasshoppers. See this link:

<https://bit.ly/44XjUEa> Be aware that the baited grain mentioned near the end of the article must never be used in our vegetable garden.