

The Garden Patch

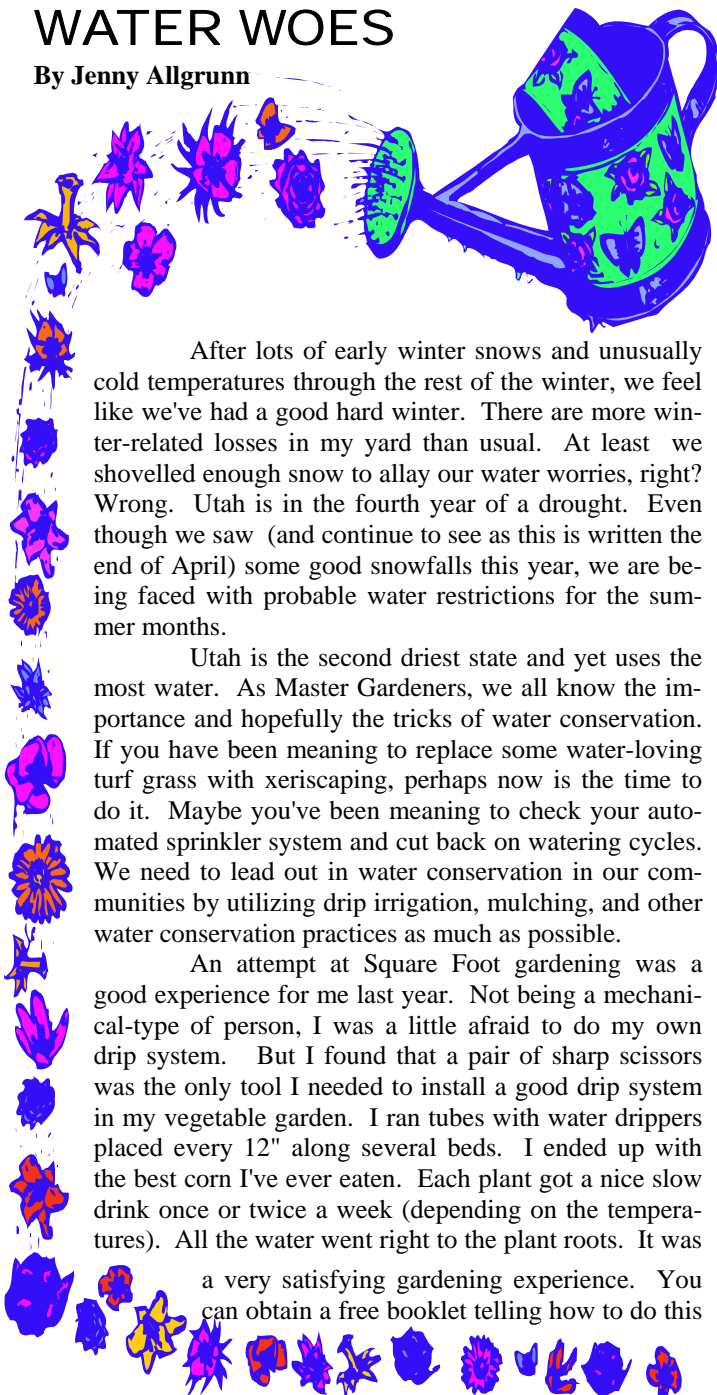
May 2002

Salt Lake Master Gardener Association

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WATER WOES

By Jenny Allgrunn



After lots of early winter snows and unusually cold temperatures through the rest of the winter, we feel like we've had a good hard winter. There are more winter-related losses in my yard than usual. At least we shovelled enough snow to allay our water worries, right? Wrong. Utah is in the fourth year of a drought. Even though we saw (and continue to see as this is written the end of April) some good snowfalls this year, we are being faced with probable water restrictions for the summer months.

Utah is the second driest state and yet uses the most water. As Master Gardeners, we all know the importance and hopefully the tricks of water conservation. If you have been meaning to replace some water-loving turf grass with xeriscaping, perhaps now is the time to do it. Maybe you've been meaning to check your automated sprinkler system and cut back on watering cycles. We need to lead out in water conservation in our communities by utilizing drip irrigation, mulching, and other water conservation practices as much as possible.

An attempt at Square Foot gardening was a good experience for me last year. Not being a mechanical-type of person, I was a little afraid to do my own drip system. But I found that a pair of sharp scissors was the only tool I needed to install a good drip system in my vegetable garden. I ran tubes with water drippers placed every 12" along several beds. I ended up with the best corn I've ever eaten. Each plant got a nice slow drink once or twice a week (depending on the temperatures). All the water went right to the plant roots. It was

a very satisfying gardening experience. You can obtain a free booklet telling how to do this

in most gardening supply stores. This year I'm adding tubes for the tomatoes, with an emitter every 18". I also put the tomatoes on a different line as some of the other crops that like a little more frequent watering.

If you decide to do some xeriscaping this spring, here are some hints from Franci DeLong, who gave a great presentation at our January meeting. Define watering zones in your yard and design your irrigation system around the zones. If you find you have water lovers growing next to water conservers, you can just add a few extra emitters to the water lovers. Cover your drip system with mulch. Aside from aesthetics, it protects the equipment from sunlight damage. All the bulbs we enjoy this time of year are water conservers, so go ahead and plant plenty. Remember that a xeric plant needs to get established. Perennials usually need only a few extra drinks the first few months after transplanting, but shrubs take at least a year and trees two years. Hand water them for their extra drinks during this time rather than overwatering surrounding plants.

Remember that once a tree is established, it will be happier if it isn't watered as often as annuals and turf grass, so try to avoid mixing trees and water lovers in your landscape and in your watering system.

No one likes a brown lawn, but if we are subjected to severe water restrictions this summer, cutting back on watering turf grass is probably the best place to start. A lawn watered only once a week may not be totally green all summer, but it will develop deeper roots and will do better than you may think. Turf grass is generally a tougher plant that it appears to be and will green up nicely come fall even after a summer of thirst. Remember to run sprinklers to turf grass only in the early morning or other "cool of the day" times.

Good luck to all of us gardeners during year four of the drought!

Word of the Month

By Sherman Brough



CROWN
(kraun)
from the Latin word **co-rona** or **coronilla**, a **crown**, **wreath** or **garland**

1. The head of foliage of a tree or shrub.
2. The region of a seed plant at which stem and root merge.

We most often use the term 'crown' to mean the uppermost part of a tree or shrub (definition #1) For some time I expected to find Crown Gall or Crown Rot under definition #1, but in the case of these two diseases, definition #2 is the one involved. These two disease groups produce cancerous galls or rotting at the soil surface (the crown). They are common and found in many landscape and garden trees. I find them most frequently in the trees and shrubs of the genus *Prunus* (plum, peach, nectarine, cherry, apricot). The bacterium *Agrobacterium tumefaciens*, Crown Gall, forms soft woody galls which grow rapidly, at soil level. The fungus diseases *Phytophthora* spp. kills the woody tissue at soil level on roots and trunk. Both diseases block the movement of water and nutrients to the top of the tree, causing drying and death of leaves, branches, and eventually sometimes the entire tree. Galls grow to softball size or larger and can be cut out with an axe during the dry summer, resulting in an increase in survival rate.

I seem to be on the mend from my surgery. With the help of my son, I have been able to get the garden ready and most of it planted. I have come to the conclusion that it is less trouble to do things myself than to explain how I want things done.

The warm weather has really been great for my garden. The spinach I planted just before the last snow storm in March greeted me with green growth the first of April. I planted the cole crops the last week of March along with my early tomatoes. With clear plastic as mulch under the tomatoes and with water walls, I have some that are growing 6 inches out of the top of the wall already. I picked my first ripe tomato, a Glacier, on April 14th. I had seeded it December 21st. This is 15 days ahead of my previous record. Hey, Bart! It ain't braggin' if you done it, right?

My wife found me pruning the peach tree and shut me down. It was too soon after the operation, she said. In the three weeks since that time, I have finally got that job completed. I do have some pruning work left on my apple tree. *The apricots bloomed late this year, and the peaches and apples are not too far behind. I applied the first application of volic oil and Diazinon spray on April 11. I have found that in the past I have waited too long to apply it. My rose hedge seems to get a lot of aphids when I do not get it on early enough.

My Lenten rose is in full bloom. What a weird looking plant. It has a few old leaves and all of these great flowers. It is growing on the north side of the house at one end of my hosta bed. I mulched the hosta bed, then piled on the pine needles. I

Golden's Garden

By Wm. Golden Reeves

hope to keep the slugs and snails out of it.

I have been waiting for some April showers to fertilize my lawn. With that not happening, I did go ahead and mow it short to fertilize. Then I got my sprinkler system turned on and adjusted so I could water it for a short time. Some areas of the lawn were green and crunchy - very dry.

In cleaning up my garden, I had to take all the beets and carrots out of the pit. I had enough beets to pickle and bottle 6 quarts. I baked them in the oven until tender, then put them in the bottles. They hold their color and taste a lot better.

Finally some April showers and snow have come! This should jumpstart the seeds I have planted in the garden. I started my cucumber and squash planted in the basement. In the next few days as the weather warms up, I will put them in water walls in the garden. I am sprouting my corn on the seeding mat in the basement. When they sprout, I need to put them in pots for a few weeks before moving them into the garden.

I have about 100 bags of leaves left over. As I start mowing the lawn, I will mix them to start another pile in my compost area. The biggest cost for my compost bins was the land it sits on. Five wood pallets and a few used blocks along with some old metal fence posts make up my composting area. Nothing fancy like Beth's. A little bit cheaper, also.

It is nice to have some rain in April. With the promise of warm weather ahead, I can unload the greenhouse and plant the perennials I started from seed. I will keep prepared, though, just in case Old Man Winter wants to make another visit this season!

GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEER HOURS

General Guidelines

Volunteer hours will be counted for the following:

1. Time worked on any approved project.
2. Travel time to and from projects, speaking engagements, and Board meetings.
3. Time spent fulfilling Association assignments such as: Project Coordinator, special committees, etc.
4. Time spent fulfilling an elected position on the Executive Board.
5. Reasonable time spent in preparation for a speaking assignment, as well as the time spent fulfilling the assignment.
6. Time spent in preparing a news article or doing other chores that help get The Garden Patch published and distributed.
7. Time spent working on community projects outside of the Association-approved projects. Some examples are Red Butte, Sandy Beautification Committee, church gardens (all demoninations), and other such gardening projects.
8. No time is counted for work in your own yard or a neighbor's yard.
9. If you are working on a community project of your own, the SLMG Board needs to know what the project is. If two or more Master Gardeners are working on it, that project must be approved by the Board.
10. Time spent on a project outside of Salt Lake County (for example, Thanksgiving Point Gardens) must be counted in that county unless it does not have a Master Gardener program, in which case it can be counted in Salt Lake County.
11. Non-Certified students must complete 40 hours on approved projects. The hours should be in at least three areas. One of the projects should have a minimum of ten hours. Our goal is to provide students with a variety of experiences. Projects listed in item 7 above may be counted for up to 10 of these first 40 hours. However, church gardens (any denomination) can only be counted after the first 40 hours have been filled elsewhere. Once the first 40 hours have been filled as per these guidelines, other projects of community service relating to gardening and teaching gardening (including church gardens) may be counted. Please note that at least one of these projects MUST involve actual hands on gardening - getting your fingers dirty.

How To Get a Project Approved

All aspects of the project must be described and submitted in writing to the Executive Board for evaluation and approval. The project must have value to the community and be within the abilities and capabilities of the Association. A written report will be issued from the Executive Board to the proposal submitter.

We have had several requests to advertise in The Garden Patch either products or business opportunities. Several of you have garden oriented businesses and are looking for employees. We are sorry we cannot help you in this way. However, the board has determined that you may make such announcements in the general monthly meetings

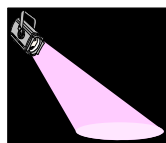
HAIKUS

*How many, many things
They call to mind,
These cherry-blossoms!
--Basho*

*Departing spring
Hesitates
In the late cherry-blossoms.
--Buson*

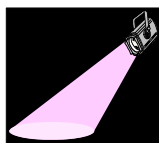
*Silent flowers
Speak also
To that obedient ear within.*

-- Onitsura



Spotlight

On Andrew Israelsen



My name is Andrew Israelsen. I live in Taylorsville, Utah with my wife, Yvonne, my 11-year-old daughter Haley, my 3 year-old daughter McKenzie, and my 3 month-old son Caleb.

My love for gardening started at a young age. I grew up on a Dairy farm in Hyrum, Utah. Besides growing alfalfa, barley, and field corn for the cows, we had a large garden where we grew all kinds of vegetables and berries.

After I got married I didn't have many opportunities to garden until I moved to West Valley. In 1998 my neighbor and I decided we were going to grow gardens, and to top it off we would have a contest to see who could grow the biggest pumpkin. I quickly learned how bad my soil was. Every time I watered, my soil would develop a hard crust on top. I had to break up the crust with my hands to get my peas to come up. My corn only grew three feet high and my pumpkins were embarrassingly small. My neighbor, on the other hand, grew a pumpkin that was nearly 70 pounds. I was amazed at how fast it grew. Every time I went to visit, I first had to go out to the garden to look at his amazing pumpkin.

I vowed then that next year I was going to grow a bigger pumpkin than my neighbor. I learned about adding leaves, wood shavings, ammonium sulfate, and compost to

amend and build up the soil. The next year I grew a 98-pound pumpkin and the year after that 155 pounds. That year (2000) I took my pumpkin to a contest at Thanksgiving Point and took first place for the biggest non-'Atlantic Giant' pumpkin. I spent the whole day talking to these guys who grow 400, 500, and even 600-pound pumpkins. I asked them about how they obtained the right seed, how they prepared the soil, when they planted, how they watered and fertilized, and anything else I could think of. After that I was totally hooked (My wife calls it 'obsessed.') My biggest pumpkin to date is 370 pounds and I lost a pumpkin at 470 pounds (and still growing) due to a split on the side. Just like a fisherman I always talk about the one that got away.

Last Fall I had a chance to take the Master Gardener class. I have learned a lot and it has been great fun as well. Most people laugh when I tell them I took the Master Gardening class to learn how to grow bigger pumpkins. Of course that is only partially true. I also took the class to learn about the other aspects of gardening and lawn care. When I outgrow my obsession for pumpkins, I will have plenty of other areas to explore. By the way, if anyone has ever thought about growing giant pumpkins, let me know. I have plenty of free seeds and advice for all who are interested. (aisraelsen@attbi.com)

POTTING SOIL MEASURES

Have you ever wondered how much potting soil to buy?

One cubic foot of potting soil will fill:

- 11 - seedling trays (20 row trays), or
- 7 - seven standard seeding flats, or
- 11 - 8 inch hanging baskets, or
- 5 - 10 inch hanging baskets, or
- 6 - 8 inch round pots, or
- 48 - 4 inch round pots, or
- 256 - 2 1/4 inch round pots.



- 1 bushel = 1 1/4 cubic feet
- 1 cubic yard = 27 cubic feet or 22 bushels
- 100 square feet bed with 6 inches of soil = 40 bushels or 50 cubic feet

(Information courtesy of www.botanical.com)

The Magic of Spring

By Kathy Lillywhite



Many plants have magical aspects. It's amazing to watch the puffs of wisteria change into cascades of delicate color and the round nubs that burst into apple blossoms. My many newly planted shrub roses grown on their own roots gratify me by sending out little bursts of green low to the ground, just when I thought the winter had been too much for them. But mostly, I love the way some plants seem to magically appear after being dormant and forgotten since late last summer. The sprouts of lilies, Peonies, Dicentra, Hosta, and the uncurling fronds of ferns-- these perennials are quite amazing verifications of life. They go through the slumber cycle and awake quite nicely unless disturbed by giant clean up crews with powerful strokes of metal rakes or if stepped on by steel-shanked boots. Tender growth tips can be damaged quite easily causing weakened growth or even fatality.

Why the great surge to clean up nature's gems? The soil needs organic material. Leaves fall from trees, wither, decompose and return to the soil; the natural thing for leaves to do. There is nothing better than leaves for organic matter to enrich the soil. Why rush to rake them all up in the name of the great big tidy up?

This reminds me of a story that Martha Stewart tells about some newly hired help she had employed once to prune her fruit trees while she was away. When she returned to her home she noticed that her neighbor was out pruning her fruit trees back to the trunks! She asked the neighbor what she was doing to her trees. The neighbor responded that she was just following what she had seen done in Martha's own orchard. Martha was aghast at the treatment that her hired help had done to her fruit trees, let alone the fact that the neighbor had blindly followed suit.

It's true that certain areas of your garden need a hand in cleaning up piles of winter debris. Diseases are somewhat of a problem, lurking in moist packed layers of leaves. Powdery mildew or aspen leaf spot are fungal diseases that can survive through the winter, harboring in leaf and debris piles and then infecting the plant when conditions are favorable in the spring.

But I still say spring gardens should be appreciated one day at a time. Within the first few days that the earth begins to warm, I make the rounds with an ice cream bucket full of Iron Phosphate, the kind sold in a bag labeled "Sluggo". This I hand-sprinkle in all flowerbeds to surprise the awakening slugs and snails. Then as I gently scratch the top layer of earth, turning the leaves and bait into the soil, I scrutinize the site, watching for all of the miraculous sprouting buds. A heavy hand with the rake would wreck havoc with this new immersing growth. Enthusiastic clippers as well, can ruin new growth. The many varieties of Hydrangea and Clematis slumber very deeply, and those vines can appear dead at first glance. Don't be in a hurry to prune away their growth.

Once the ground has warmed and wanted seedlings have appeared, a nice two to three inch layer of mulch applied to discourage weeds and retain the precious moisture will be in order.

Being outside with the fresh air and fragrant plants revitalizes and refreshes. Why rush? If you hurry your gardening, you'll probably miss the fresh blue blooms of Brunnera and the sweetest pastels of the epimediums. Gardening can provide so much pleasure that maintenance and cost become unimportant. Gardens are simply a source of relaxation and well-being.