

LETTUCE INFORM YOU

2022 ELBERT COUNTY SUMMER ISSUE

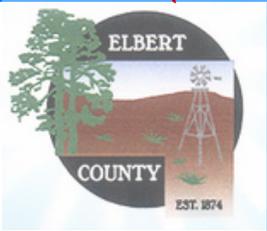
MASTER GARDENER NEWSLETTER

The Elbert County Fair Is Coming To Town

July 30 - August 7, 2022

Elbert County Fairgrounds, Kiowa, CO

The Master Gardener Fair Booth will be open for business!!



- The check-in and entry for the Open Class exhibits will be from 8 am to 11:30 am on Wednesday, August 3 through the south doors of the Ag Building. Master Gardeners will be there to help you with your Horticulture and Floriculture entries and to help with the judging. Judging is at 1 pm. Silent observation of the judging is permitted. You can enter flowers, plants, vegetables to show off your green thumb! (Only \$5/entry fee)
- The Master Gardener educational booth and silent auction will be open from 8 am to 6 pm, Thursday (August 4) thru Saturday (August 6) in the Ag Building Meeting Room. Master Gardeners from Elbert County will be available to answer your questions on gardening, weeds, good bugs and bad bugs.
- On Thursday, August 4, at 10:30 am we will have an educational presentation on gardening issues.
- On Friday, August 5, at 10:30 am we will have an educational presentation "Bee-Engaged" free seminar with honey giveaways. There will be a Bee Observation Hive between 12 noon and 2 pm, "Find the Queen Activity"
- On Saturday, August 6, at 10:30 am there will be a Master Gardener Special Presentation, Walking Tour, Ag Building
- The Silent Auction opens at 8 am on Thursday, August 4, and closes at 4 pm on Saturday, August 6. There will be a lot of special items for adults, teens, and children. There will be beautiful plants in the auction.
- There will be a Kid's Korner with a raffle for the kids. The kids always have great fun with this!!
- Snacks, coffee, water, and juice will be for sale for a nominal cost in the Ag Building Meeting Room

Seminars & Walks by the Elbert County Master Gardeners

- Composting - Visiting Richter Lands Compost, June 18, 10 am - 12 am
- Walking with the Natives - Western Elbert County Location, was May 21, Postponed due to weather, date and time to be announced
- Weed Walk - Reuter-Hess Incline, Castle Rock, July 8, 6 pm - 8 pm

Register at <https://forms.gle/hyW5VB2Y9m7Cq9sy9>
Or call (303) 621-3162



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What are Bumble Bees?



Excerpted from *Bumblebees of the Western United States* by a partnership between the United States Forest Service and The Pollinator Partnership Submitted by Cathy Ramsey -Colorado Master Gardener - Elbert County

There are over 3,000 described bee species in the United States, and all but a handful are native to North America. Of these, about 40 species belong to the genus *Bombus*, these are the bumble bees. Bumble bees are corbiculate (they have pollen baskets on their hind legs) social bees that live and work in colonies headed by a single queen who is the mother of all the other nest residents. *Also known as Flying Teddybears*

Relative to other bees, bumble bees have large bodies, although body size in some species can vary greatly from workers to queens. They are generally furrier than most other bees and have other physiological adaptations that allow for flight in cold and cloudy conditions when other bees are inactive. There are currently about 250 described bumble bee species worldwide.

Habitat - While they are closely related to the non-native European honey bee (*Apis mellifera*), bumble bees do not produce commercial quantities of honey, and are used less often in commercial pollination. However, bumble bees are arguably more important in the pollination of native flowers in natural ecosystems of the United States, and have evolved in a broad array of habitats, from the Puget Sound in Washington to the deserts of the Southwest.

As a genus, bumble bees inhabit temperate regions worldwide and several species are even known from the equatorial regions of the Neotropics. However, bumble bees dominate the pollination landscape in northern climates. They are important in boreal forests, cold prairies, coastal plains, and mountain habitats. Their ability to survive in cold climates makes them the primary pollinators of alpine flowering plants and some of the few organisms that can survive in an arctic environment or at high elevations where temperatures drop well below freezing in the winter.

When looking for bumble bees it is best to go to where flowers are blooming. Do not expect to find a nest as they are often underground in abandoned rodent burrows; instead focus on bumble bees visiting flowers. In forested areas, we most commonly encounter bumble bees along stream courses, in meadows, recently burned or logged areas, or on flowers by roadsides. Each different micro-habitat provides different resources and a greater chance to encounter a new species of bumble bee. (Continued on next page.)



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MASTER GARDENER NEWSLETTER



What are Bumblebees con't.

Diet Bumble bees are generalist foragers, feeding on a diverse suite of pollen and nectar resources. In the course of foraging for floral resources for the nest, an individual bumble bee will move pollen within a plant (for self-fertile plants), or from one plant to another (for out-crossing plants), affecting pollination success. For the bumble bee this is incidental but ecologically important nonetheless. The bumble bee collects extra pollen and consumes nectar which it transports back to the nest to feed the developing larval bees.

A nearly constant supply of dietary resources is critical to colony growth and development. In the laboratory a nest of 100 bumble bees will consume nearly 2g of pollen and over 40ml of sugar syrup a day requiring nearly constant foraging. The nests of some species have been observed to reach a size of over 1000 individuals, while other species rarely exceed 50 individuals. The available floral resources in a habitat will determine what type of bumble bee species can survive in an area as well as the density of nests an ecosystem can support.

Bumble bees are important pollinators of wild land plants and are the primary pollinators for crops in greenhouses. Bumble bees are especially effective at pollinating plants in the nightshade family (Solanaceae) which includes pepper, tomato, and eggplant. While these plants are self-fertile, they benefit from bumble bee visits which help release pollen within the flowers. In addition many berry (blueberry, cranberry, currant, and raspberry), fruit (apricot, apple, melon, and squash), and seed crops (alfalfa, clover, and onion) are benefitted by bumble bees.



Life Cycle Bumble bees are considered primitively eusocial because they form colonies founded by a solitary queen in the spring of each year. A queen lives only one year, but some species can produce over a thousand offspring in that time. The solitary queen typically overwinters in the ground in a small cavity she excavated termed a hibernaculum. As the snow melts and the soil warms in the spring, the queen emerges and begins flying around looking for a nest site, while stopping to feed on nectar-producing flowers.



Most bumble bees nest in the ground in cavities such as abandoned rodent burrows, holes in building foundations, or stacks of firewood. Once the queen finds a suitable site, she will begin preparing the nest space by building a small wax cup, called a honey pot, and collects pollen which she will use to feed her developing brood. When the nest is sufficiently provisioned, she will lay eggs on the pollen lump and begin incubating the eggs by laying her abdomen over the brood to keep the eggs or larvae warm. At this point the queen remains in the nest unless she needs to collect more food. Nearly four weeks after laying the first eggs her first workers will emerge as adults and begin the jobs of foraging, nest cleaning, and brood care.

The colony will grow throughout the summer and the workers will help the queen produce a clutch of male offspring, followed soon by new queen bees. These reproductive bees will leave the nest and find mates. After mating, the males die and the queens feed briefly before digging their individual hibernacula and become dormant for the winter.



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A Native Dandelion

By Sue Dingwell, Colorado Native Plant Society

Submitted by Cathy Ramsey, Colorado MG - Elbert County

Nothocalais cuspidata, native to Colorado and appearing at the right time for our native pollinators. That's right! This is a native dandelion, not a European import. *Nothocalais cuspidata* has many common names associated with it: Wavyleaf dandelion, Sharp point Dandelion, and Prairie false dandelion are among them. The good news is, once you wrap your mind around it, it's not hard to use the one, real, scientific name: NO tho KAL is – KUS pi DAH ta. There. Not so bad, right? And it makes the plant so much prouder to hear it instead of being labeled a 'false' anything. Important to keep our plant friends happy.



At first glance the native dandelion looks a lot like the common yellow dandelion you see popping up everywhere, including lawns, *Taraxacum officinale*. But a closer look quickly reveals many differences. In the *Flora of Colorado* Ackerfield uses the common name 'Prairie dandelion' for *Nothocalais cuspidata*, and describes the leaves as being 'weakly crispate and ciliolate.' Those leaves definitely grab the attention. Crispate means curled, crinkly, or wavy, which they certainly are. Ciliolate means that the leaves of Prairie dandelion have a fringe of minute hairs, seen below. Where the common dandelion has serrated leaves, Prairie dandelion has entire margins, the edges are not notched or toothed.

The leaves of Prairie dandelion attract attention in early spring



Ciliolate, crispate leaves up close.

Unlike the common non-native which will fight for space, Prairie dandelion does not thrive in competition. It grows in the plains and outer foothills from 3800-7000 feet, in dry, rocky spots with gravelly soil, where they make use of deep and stout taproots to help them survive in their preferred full-sun spots. Flower stalks are leafless and produce a single flower, but each plant can produce multiple flowers. The prairie dandelion has only ray flowers, no disk flowers. One last interesting fact from the *Flora*: the Prairie dandelion is lactiferous. Oh yes: has milky sap!

Bracts also overlap but in a single layer with sharply pointed tip, hairless, and often spotted or striped with red. The petaloid rays overlap in shades of yellow to gold.

Look for this beauty right now when you're out on the trails.

For comparison, the two photos here are the common dandelion we see almost everywhere, *Taraxacum officinale*.



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MASTER GARDENER NEWSLETTER

RED MAPLE TREE MENACE TO HORSES

Summary of article in Equus magazine written by Helena Ragone from her interview with Dr. Anthony Knight, DVM at Colorado State University
Summary by Raylene Owen, Elbert County Master Gardener

In recent years varieties of red maple, such as Autumn Blaze, Autumn Flame, and Red Sunset, have become a very popular tree to plant along the front range. Their spectacular red fall color is the attraction. But, if you are a horse owner, there is a dark side to this tree and its hybrids.

Maple toxicosis is unique to horses and other equids. It does not affect sheep, cattle or other farm animals. The danger to horses that eat wilted or dried red maple (*Acer rubrum*) leaves has long been known. Evidence is growing that other types of maple leaves can also fatally poison horses. Evidence now indicates that other trees of the *Acer* genus, such as sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) and silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*), and their hybrids, may also pose a threat. Any maple crossed with *Acer rubrum* to get the bright red fall color, will be toxic.

Norway maples (*Acer platanoides*), both red (purple) and green varieties, are far less toxic and are not thought to be a problem.

Adult horses need to eat 1 to 2 pounds of dried or wilted maple leaves to be affected. The toxicity is dose related, the number of leaves eaten, relative to the horse's body weight.



Toxins in the plant, damage the hemoglobin in the red blood cells. Tissues through out the body become starved of oxygen and begin to fail. If you see your horse eat maple leaves, do not wait for signs to appear. Call your veterinarian immediately, says Dr. Knight. There is no specific antidote, but supportive therapy may help.

To keep horses safe it is important to identify the maple species in or around your pastures. If you are unable to identify the tree, bring samples in to the Elbert County Extension office for a Master Gardener to help you.

Promptly remove fallen branches and leaves from pastures. Rake and remove autumn leaves to keep them away from grazing horses. Be especially vigilant if horses are in dry lots. The most important thing to remember is that horses that are well fed on good quality forage are much less likely to chose to eat maple leaves or other toxic plants.



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Redbud

Tree Planting Tips

Keep straps loose and remove stakes after 1-2 growing seasons

Remove container, wire basket, burlap and/or rope from the root ball before backfilling

Backfill with unamended soil and add mulch on top

Top of root ball should be 1-2 inches above grade

Dig 3X as wide as the root ball, tapering the sides

Place the rootball on undug or compacted soil

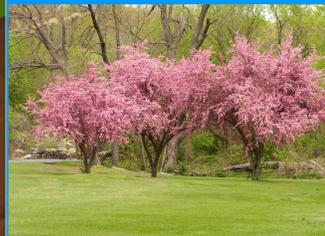
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Maple Tree



Blue spruce



Crabapple Tree



Bur Oak Tree

Tree Watering Tips

Don't forget to water during fall and winter months when irrigation systems are turned off!

Water newly planted trees multiple times per week at the root ball depending on soil moisture

As the tree grows, place water away from the trunk, out toward the dripline

Water trees during prolonged dry fall and winter periods to prevent root damage

Most tree roots are located in the top 6-18" of soil and spread 2-3 times beyond the drip line

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Aspen Tree



Apple Tree



Mulberry Tree



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[https://growgive.extension.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/63/2021/01/Colorado-Vegetable-Guide-](https://growgive.extension.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/63/2021/01/Colorado-Vegetable-Guide-2.1.pdf)

[2.1.pdf](https://growgive.extension.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/63/2021/01/Colorado-Vegetable-Guide-2.1.pdf)

Download the Vegetable Guide here.



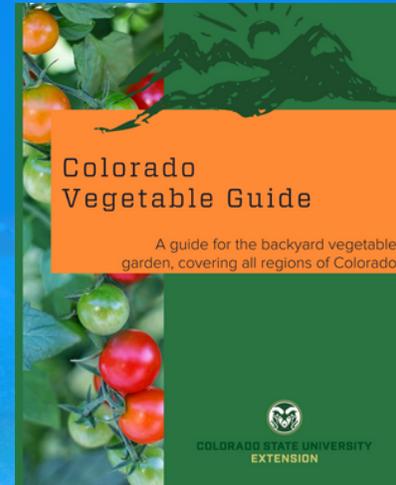
Colorado Vegetable Guide

By Cathy Ramsey – Colorado Master Gardener, Elbert County

This Colorado Vegetable Guide produced by the Colorado State University Extension is a fantastic guide to vegetable gardening in our intense and diversified climate. It is a succinct and easy to follow booklet, providing detailed information on soil preparation, planting seeds, lists of vegetables for Colorado, and watering tips.

From the Booklet's introduction:

This booklet is intended to provide research-based information about vegetable gardening in Colorado. It was adapted from an excellent guide produced in El Paso County by Colorado Master Gardener Volunteers. If you need lawn or gardening information or problem-solving assistance, please stop by, call, or send email to your local county extension office. To find your local office go to the following link: <https://extension.colostate.edu/staff-directory>. The office for Elbert County is located at 95 Ute Avenue in Kiowa. Contact information is (303) 621-3162, CoopExt Elbert coopext_elbert@mail.colostate.edu



This booklet will guide you in selecting types and varieties of vegetables that will grow well in Colorado. As Colorado has a wide variety of different environments, much of the booklet will discuss generalities with highlighted differences for mountain or plains growing practices. It will also assist you in diagnosing insect, disease and environmental problems.

Many vegetables can be grown successfully in the Pikes Peak region, but anyone new to vegetable gardening (or new to gardening in this area) would be wise to spend some time learning about and understanding our soil and what is meant by proper soil preparation. Other important topics to explore are irrigation and mulching, as well as the planting dates for the various cool and warm weather crops and which vegetable varieties have short maturity dates and do well in Colorado. Ideally, this should all be done before one seed is planted.

When you begin to plan your garden, first go over the basic gardening information at the beginning of the booklet. Once you have chosen which vegetables to grow, read about the culture of each vegetable, which is covered separately in the Vegetable section of this booklet. If problems develop after your garden is growing, turn to the back of the book where you will find sections for insects, diseases and environmental problems as well as regional and organic growing options. These sections will help with diagnosis, control and/ or prevention of insect and disease damage. We hope you find this booklet useful in starting your garden as well as throughout the growing season.



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MASTER GARDENER NEWSLETTER

Perennials: Why, When & How to Divide Them

Posted on the CU Horts Blog by: Judy Kunz, Master Gardener, Arapahoe County

Submitted by Cathy Ramsey

Perennials are a great addition to any garden, but some may need to be divided after a few years. Make note if they are no longer blooming, have developed bare spots in the center, are floppy or they have outgrown their space. However, not all perennials should be divided at the same time. Spring is the ideal time to divide summer and fall blooming perennials while spring blooming perennials should be divided in late summer or early fall.

Dividing summer and fall blooming perennials in spring is preferred because the plants are not expending their energy to produce blooms at that time, and they tend to be smaller and easier to handle. Spring division also gives plants the upcoming growing season to direct their energy toward producing a healthy root system before blooming later.

Some of the goals of dividing perennials are to improve the health and appearance of the plants by increasing the amount of light and air available, to increase flowering, to relocate plants that have outgrown their space or to increase the number of plants, more commonly known as plant propagation.

Before dividing existing plants, it is important to think about the feasibility of the new site. Consider the size and height of the new plants, as well as the amount of sunlight hours available. For ease in handling and transplanting, perennials should be divided just as new growth begins to emerge in the spring. To minimize plant dehydration, choose a cooler day in spring when the ground is moist and can be easily worked. Overcast weather is ideal.

After dividing, rinse roots with a hose or dunk them in a bucket of water. Trim any dead growth and plant new divisions at the same depth as the parent plant. To minimize plant shock, it is helpful to have the transplanting hole prepared. Roots exposed to air can dry out quickly. Water in after planting and continue to monitor soil moisture during the growing season.

Perennials have three basic root systems that are handled somewhat differently at the time of division:

- Plants with spreading root systems like ornamental grasses have thick, fibrous roots. They can be divided by pulling apart or by cutting with a sharp shovel or garden knife. Each division should have at least three to five shoots with roots included.
- Hostas or daylilies have clumping root systems that can be divided by pulling them apart, by cutting through the crown with a sharp knife, or prying them apart using two back-to-back pitchforks facing outward. Each division should include several buds with roots.
- Plants like iris have underground rhizomes that are actually thick, fleshy underground stems with roots attached. These plants require division by cutting with a sharp knife or shovel. Replant new divisions with the rhizomes at or slightly below ground level. In the case of iris, trim the leaves to prevent wind from uprooting the new transplants.

It will take several seasons for the new plants to reach their previous size, but dividing them now is well worth the effort. They will reward you with stronger, straighter stems, healthier foliage and more robust flowering.

By the way, don't forget to share extra cuttings with friends!



North Carolina State University Extension



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MASTER GARDENER NEWSLETTER

When and How to Prune Your Flowering Woody Shrubs

By Cathy Ramsey, Colorado Master Gardener - Elbert County

Excerpted from article By Gail Leidigh, CSU Extension-Denver Master Gardener



In this article, we're taking a look at pruning woody flowering shrubs – a task that is sometimes misunderstood or easy to put off. However, with a bit of effort, you can improve the vigor, health, pollinator allure, and enjoyment of these plants. Here are some helpful tips.

Woody shrubs typically have multiple branches which emerge from the ground, retain their shrub-like shape after shedding their foliage in the winter, and are 12' tall or less at maturity. New growth re-emerges in the spring on the existing branches. Woody shrubs are unlike herbaceous perennials, which die to the ground each winter and send out new growth from the ground each spring. The key to knowing when to prune is whether the shrub flowers in the spring or the summer.

Spring-flowering shrubs bloom on new growth from the previous year. In other words, it blooms on branches that grew during the summer and fall after it finished blooming the prior spring. This means that if you prune during the fall, winter, or early spring, you will be cutting off that new growth with potential buds. Therefore, the best time of the season to prune a spring-flowering shrub is shortly after it finishes blooming. This post-bloom pruning can help shape, remove dead branches, increase flowering the following year, and maintain the plant's size. Common spring-flowering shrubs are lilac, forsythia, viburnum, and beauty bush.

Fall shearing of this spring-flowering lilac removed flower buds on the lower section of the shrub. Source: CSU Extension GardenNotes



Shrubs that flower in the summer bloom on new growth that happens in the spring season, so they can be pruned during dormancy in the winter and early spring without affecting the blooms, and the pruning may actually stimulate desirable growth. Common summer-flowering shrubs are hydrangea (Colorado-hardy types, such as "Pee Gee," or "Annabelle"), butterfly bush, • rose of sharon, blue mist spirea.

This snowball hydrangea responded well to being thinned over winter. Photo by: Gail Leidigh



Both spring and summer-flowering shrubs can be pruned with the goal of encouraging new growth using thinning or rejuvenation methods, which are best to complete during the dormant season of late winter/early spring. These techniques are particularly effective for older shrubs with lots of dead wood.



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MASTER GARDENER NEWSLETTER

When and How to Prune Your Flowering Woody Shrubs con/t

Thinning is the selective removal of older canes that allows for more sunlight and air circulation and stimulates the growth of new shoots. Up to one-third of the oldest wood in a shrub can be cut to the ground. Thinning helps with some insect and disease problems, such as lilac ash borer and powdery mildew and encourages more blooms. This method can be time consuming, but it is time well spent if you are able.

Rejuvenation pruning is cutting a plant back to the base, which is quick and easy to do while getting maximum results. This prompts the shrub to regrow from its roots and act like a young shrub again with lots of blooms and a smaller size. This should only be done every 3 – 5 years after the plant starts to look leggy and overgrown. One drawback to dormant season rejuvenation pruning is that you will have to wait another year for spring-flowering shrubs to bloom again.

Sheared forsythia in full bloom. Shearing does not encourage new wood.

Source: CSU Extension Garden Notes

An unfortunate pruning technique that can be seen just about everywhere you look is the shearing of a shrub into a ball or flat-topped shape. This is undesirable for most types of plants other than formal hedges. Shearing causes thick growth on the outer most parts of the shrub, which then blocks light to the inside and underside leaving the interior woody and prone to weather damage. Over time, plants subject to this poor treatment and may need to be replaced.

This CSU handout contains an expanded list of woody plants with pruning advice.
[CommonFloweringShrubsandPruningNeeds.pdf \(colostate.edu\)](#)

FUN FACTS: THE MORE YOU KNOW, THE MORE THERE IS TO KNOW!

Submitted by Raylene Owen, Colorado Master Gardener, Elbert County

- The world's tallest growing tree is the redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*) but the world's oldest tree is the Bristlecone pine (*Pinus aristata*).
- Angiosperm, which means covered seed, is the scientific name for vascular, flowering plants and refers to the seeds being borne in an ovary, usually a capsule or a fruit. Gymnosperm, which means naked seed, is the scientific name for vascular, non flowering plants, such as pines, spruces, firs, junipers, cycads, ginkgo, and yews.
- Peaches, pears, apricots, quinces, strawberries and apples are members of the rose family (*Rosaceae*), as are spirea, mountain ash and ninebark.
- The average strawberry has 200 seeds. It's the only fruit that bears it's seeds on the outside. Each seed is actually one of the ovaries of the flower, with a seed inside of it.
- Deer can jump 8 feet high.
- There are at least 10,000 varieties of tomatoes.
- An herb is from the leaf of the plant. A spice is from the seed, bark, root, berry, or bulb.



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