



Washington County Master Gardeners Newsletter • August 2022



Please note! Your email provider may show an abbreviated version of this newsletter, so if you see the words "[Message clipped] View entire message" or something similar at the end of this email, be sure to click on "View entire message" so you don't miss a thing!

Having said all that, *Garden Thyme* may be best viewed in your browser (instead of viewing it within your email). Formatting within an email often gets messed up (sorry for the technical jargon there), which is a frustration for you and your newsletter committee as we work so hard to provide you with a newsletter lovely to behold. So, to view *Garden Thyme* in its full glory, just click on the link at the top of this page that says, "View this email in your browser."

August Meeting: The UA Herbarium

Hope to see you all at our August 2 meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the Washington County Extension Office. A Zoom option will also be available; Colin will email the link a day or so before the meeting.



Our guest speaker is Jennifer Ogle—botanist, author, and collections manager of the [University of Arkansas Herbarium](#). She is co-author along with Theo Witsell and Johnnie Gentry of *Trees, Shrubs, and Woody Vines of Arkansas* (Ozark Society Foundation) and co-editor along with Johnnie Gentry, George Johnson, Brent Baker, and Theo Witsell of *Atlas of the Vascular Plants of Arkansas* (Arkansas Vascular Flora Committee). In her spare time, Jennifer serves on the boards and committees of organizations focused on urban land conservation and the protection of native plants and plant communities.

Jennifer will discuss the UA Herbarium as well as *Trees, Shrubs, and Woody Vines of Arkansas*.

Photo courtesy Jennifer Ogle.

Taking Care of Business

We will vote on the following at our August 2 business meeting.

July 2022 Minutes

June 2022 Treasurer's Report

Heads up! At our September 6 meeting, we will vote on the following slate of officers:

President – Joanne Olszewski

Vice President – Elizabeth (Liz) Hale

Secretary – Kathy Launder

Treasurer – Darielle James

Assistant Treasurer – Glenda Patterson

Members at Large – Nicholas Sammer, Linda Smith, Dale Thomas

Also at our September 6 meeting, we will vote on proposed revisions to our bylaws. Please take some time to look them over between now and then. Our current bylaws are available in the Member Resource Guide located in the [Member Portal](#) section

of our WCMG website. If you've forgotten the password for the Member Portal section, email [Susan Young](#) and she'll give you the keys to the kingdom.

Proposed Revisions to Bylaws

In Memorium



We send our condolences to WCMG Dian Holmes and her family on the passing of her husband, Dudley, after a long illness. His obituary can be read [here](#).

Photo by [Jingda Chen](#) on [Unsplash](#).

From Your President

KAREN HANNA-TOWNE

Today, Next Year, Thereafter

It's been hot; too hot for too long. Our gardens are suffering and there's no end in sight. The entire northern hemisphere is sweltering. It could be climate change!

My academic colleagues who studied climate always said, "Don't call it global warming. There will be all sorts of extremes. Extremes of heat, cold, flooding, drought, and storms like we've never seen." I'm not a climate expert, or even a horticulturalist, but I've done a bit of



study and made some observations which I'll share in three time frames: now, next year, and over the long term.

I'm very lucky; my entire garden is irrigated, either with drip emitters or soaker hoses. I still patrol each day to see if anything is suffering and if so, I give it a good drink. The ferns have shown the most despair. I've lost two cinnamon ferns. This spring I also purchased plants from the Northwest Arkansas Master Naturalists and planted eight small False Indigo (*Baptisia*) in a sunny spot. Almost immediately they started to shrivel up. I gave them extra water but they still cried for help. I found some frost cloth, folded it to fit, pushed some large wooden skewers in the ground and clipped the cloth to the skewers with binder clips. They are now shaded but still get air flow underneath their canopy. Only three have died! I'm sure I would have lost them all without the canopy. I did the same for some baby succulents which are now doing fine.

The vegetable garden has its own challenges. I lost all my squash, but so far that's all. I have two eggplants in grow bags. I have to water those by hand and yesterday they were droopy, so I moved them out of the sun into part shade. Geri Alvis gave me a tip of putting an umbrella over my tomatoes, which I've done. And I watched a video by Craig LeHoullier about growing tomatoes in extreme heat. Tomatoes are self-pollinating, so the pollen just needs to fall onto the stigma, either helped by a pollinator or the wind. However, when temperatures are high the pollen becomes sticky and won't fall as it should. You can help with a small paint brush, an electric toothbrush, or even a flick of your finger. Once pollinated, the tomatoes will develop, but then other problems may set in during extreme heat. Watering must be consistent to avoid cracking or blossom end rot. Soaker hoses on timers will usually provide even watering. The tomatoes will often grow to size but not ripen. You may pick them (some say there should be some color, others say all green is OK) and let them ripen indoors where it's cooler and free of insect pests. It goes without saying that mulch is essential to preserve soil moisture and keep it cooler.

So, what about next year? There's no reason to believe that we will return to our previous weather patterns. We can hope, but the trend is not good.

First, I'll be looking for vegetable seed varieties that tolerate heat. I'll think about buying seeds for compact varieties that can thrive in pots or grow bags, giving me the option of moving them from sun to shade as needed. If I didn't already have irrigation, I would think about investing in an automated system to be sure everything gets watered when I'm too busy or out of town. In mild weather the crisis unfolds more slowly, but in the heat, plants can die very quickly. Today's irrigation approaches, such as soaker hoses on timers or a drip system on a controller, are much less expensive and more effective than overhead systems. Of course, so far you must have overhead sprays for lawn. Also, when you're watering your shrubs and perennials regularly, they won't be depleting soil moisture that your trees need. If we lose our trees, we lose our cooling shade.

For the long term there may be difficult decisions to make. Currently, I think of heat as the primary factor, but Fayetteville recently issued an alert restricting water usage due to drought. Thus far this year, we've received about 22 inches of rainfall, according to the

National Weather Service. Our typical annual total is 45 inches. We might still get there.

An approach developed in the 1980s is called xeriscape. People used to think it meant gravel and cactus—it doesn't. It means reducing water needs through a number of techniques. Usually, lawn is reserved for public ball fields. Homeowners are encouraged to think about living and non-living groundcovers and decks and patios in place of lawn, rubber mulch under play equipment, low fences to reduce drying winds while preserving views, and of course, drought tolerant plants.

Another colleague of mine studied resilient plants. Prof. Joan Woodward took her students to abandoned homesites around southern California to identify plants that had previously been irrigated but now survived on very meager rainfall. We can do the same here. Think of the daffodils that survive next to standing stone chimneys. Many native plants are drought tolerant once established—but they will need to be watered while they're babies. Our gardens do not need to become barren or ugly. It just takes some clear-eyed planning and gradual changes.

If our current climate patterns persist, a vegetable garden will become a necessity, a woodland garden enhanced with natives will be a gift to all forms of wildlife, and a flower garden will be a true luxury.

Years of Service Awards



Photo by Epic Fireworks/[Flickr.com](https://www.flickr.com/photos/epicfireworks/).

The following long-timers (not to be confused with oldtimers) will receive Years of Service pins at our August meeting. Congratulations!

Five Years

Trudy Aldridge, Myra Jane Biggers, Kathryn Birkhead, Jonathan Felker, Penelope Greenberg, Steve Harms, Kathleen Holloway, Linda Smith, Martha Sparkman, Mariette Spidel, Neta Winston

Ten Years

Anita Bukey, Tanya Collins, Susan Dawson, Jan Judy, Jody Miskell, Marty Powers, Bill Ross, Kitty Sanders, Tiffany Selvey, Nancy Sloan, Laura Wilkins

Lifetime

Wilma Bonds, Holly Childs, Mary Crumley, Lorraine Heartfield, Sandy Jensen, Kathy Launder, Lynn Sheridan, Truman Stamps, Susan Young

Lifetime Plus 25

LaDeana Mullinix

County Fair Project Update

DORIS CASSIDY, Project Chair



Washington County Fair, 2019. After you finish volunteering in the Horticulture Building you can go ride the Ferris wheel and eat some fried Oreos! Photo by Jay Stout/[Flickr.com](https://www.flickr.com/photos/jaystout/).

Cleanup day is Saturday, August 13, from 7:30 a.m. until about 2:00 p.m. We will set up and clean tables, sweep the Horticulture Building, set out vases for flowers, and hang signs inside. Outside, we will groom around the building. Most of the mowing will be done. A weed eater would be useful.

Entry day is Monday, August 22. I need workers from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. for junior fruits and vegetables, field crops, and cut flowers. This is a busy time when the youth come after school.

Judging Day is Tuesday, August 23. I need watchers from 4:00–10:00 p.m. We just answer questions and keep an eye on the exhibits.

Help is also needed on these days and times:

- Wednesday, August 24, 2:00–10:00 p.m.
- Thursday, August 25, 12:00–10:00 p.m.
- Friday, August 26, 4:00–10:00 p.m.
- Saturday, August 27, 4:00–10:00 p.m.
- Sunday, August 28, 1:30 p.m. until finished. We will clean up and store supplies for 2023 as well as check out entries.

The food booths at the fair are mostly vendor trucks that open in the evenings. We will provide food for WCMG volunteers who are working. We could use some desserts. You can drop those off at the Extension Office by 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, August 23, and I will transport the goodies to fair.

To reduce liability from vehicle traffic, the fairgrounds entrance gates will be closely monitored. If you are working, please wear your WCMG name tag as your pass onto the fairgrounds. You may drive in through the gate near the house on Knapp Drive west of the Pauline Whitaker Equine Center. If that gate is closed, use the gate in the field straight ahead. The Horticulture Building is the first building to the south with a round top (like a Quonset hut).

I will have sign-up sheets at our August 2 meeting or you may [email me](#) with your desired day and time. This is a great way to get MG service hours.

I am also accepting treasures until August 19 for our annual fundraiser sale that takes place during the fair. You may leave your items at the Extension Office. If you have large items to donate, please drop them off at the Horticulture Building on August 13, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Please note: I will not be at the fairgrounds on Saturday, August 20.

Recording Your Hours = Smiley Face!



Photo by [Tim Mossholder](#) on [Unsplash](#).

Congratulations! As of July 21, the following 2022 trainees have completed and recorded their required volunteer hours for this year: Kristi Campbell, Karen Smenner, Susan Snell, Aileen Wilson.

Well done! And there's more!

These members have completed and recorded more than 200 volunteer hours in 2022:
Doris Cassidy, Joyce Mendenhall, Susan Young

These members have completed and recorded between 100-199 volunteer hours in 2022:
Chris Bell, Kathryn Birkhead, Elizabeth Hale, Audley Hall, Darielle James, Chuck Rutherford, Donilyn Rutherford, Nancy Sloan, Jim Sposato.

And these members have completed and recorded between 50-99 volunteer hours: Alfi Anderson, Keith Blowers, Talya Boerner, Pam Butler, Kristi Campbell, Paula Dutton, Dawn Fisher, Gayle Howard, Judy Hyden, Teri Kinsey, Jayne Laster, Mary McCully, LaDeana Mullinix, Betty Nichols, Annette Pianalto, Karen Smenner, Judy Smith, Truman Stamps, Aileen Wilson

We know that there are many, many members who worked lots of hours at the conference but haven't yet recorded them, so we look forward to adding more names to this list next month.

If you have any questions about recording your hours email [Annette Pianalto](#) or [Kathryn Birkhead](#).

Sow Intentionally: Vegetable Garden Edition

DIANA OLIVER



A fall garden (left) can yield a bountiful harvest (right). *Photos by Diana Oliver.*

Planning the Fall Vegetable Garden

How can we already be at the end of July?! Even though our summer vegetable gardens are just starting to produce a harvest, it is time to decide whether you want to plant a fall vegetable garden.

Fall gardens are not nearly as popular as spring gardens. Big box stores do not typically put up displays or carry vegetable starts for the fall garden as they do for spring. Although many gardeners typically take the fall season off after a long hot summer outside, the rising cost of food is leading many gardeners to extend their growing season and plant vegetables in the fall. There are many delicious veggies that can be grown with not very much work in a fall garden. A fall garden is almost better than a spring and summer garden if you are like me and dislike the heat!

Now is the time to go to the [UA Cooperative Extension Service](#) or [Farmers' Almanac](#) websites and look up your first frost dates for your growing zone. Count back to see how many weeks you have before that frost arrives at your garden gate. You may be able to get a

second round in of your summer favorites like squash, green beans, and maybe even some tomato varieties as well. But these vegetables are frost-tender will die at the first hard frost.

Cool weather crops that can be direct-seeded now and that can withstand cold weather include peas, beets, collards, brassicas, kale, leeks, and radishes. Once the soil cools you can also grow many leafy green veggies like arugula, cilantro, winter lettuces, and turnips. These will continue to grow even after the first frost.

Take a few days now to plan, plant seeds, and dream of an abundant fall vegetable garden to enjoy during the crisp, cool, fall mornings. Grow something lovely. You will thank yourself for it later!

Natives Naturally



Antelope horns milkweed. *Photo courtesy Good Water chapter, Texas Master Naturalists.*

Editor's note: Sarah Shell Teague is on vacation. For this month's Natives Naturally, we include information from a [blog post by Mary Ann Melton](#), a member of the Good Water chapter, Texas Master Naturalists. Special thanks to WCMG Kitty Sanders for providing editing suggestions and wise counsel.

Milkweed for Monarchs!

While at Beaver Lake recently, WCMG Mary McCully spotted an unusual plant similar to the one in the photo above. Further study revealed it as antelope horns milkweed (*Asclepias asperula*). It is not native to Northwest Arkansas. A similar milkweed

that is native here is green antelopehorn milkweed (*Asclepias viridis*).

Antelope horns milkweed is also known as spider milkweed or green-flowered milkweed. From a distance the blooms appear as large green balls, but closer examination reveals the balls are clusters of small green and white flowers. The plants are one to two feet tall and are spreading. Leaves are long and narrow and often folded lengthwise. When the flowers fade, the seed pods grow curved and pointed, resembling antelope horns. When the pods burst, the seeds are attached to a silky down that helps disperse the seeds. (Fun fact: the down was used in World War II in regular and aviation life jackets.)

Milkweeds are important because monarch caterpillars can only eat milkweeds. These caterpillars form chrysalises and then the new monarch butterflies continue their journey to produce the next set of eggs and caterpillars. All milkweed species contain cardiac glycosides, which is toxic when ingested—unless you're a monarch caterpillar. The toxin does cause monarchs to taste bad and be poisonous to predators.

Milkweed flowers produce nectar with a high glucose content that benefits many other species such as native bees and honeybees—another good reason to add milkweed to your garden!

Tall green milkweed, butterfly weed, common milkweed, showy milkweed, and swamp milkweed are other native species that can be planted in landscapes as a way to help monarch butterflies. Common milkweed is an aggressive spreader and should be planted where there's plenty of room. Perhaps the easiest to grow in Northwest Arkansas is swamp milkweed which doesn't require lots of moisture but will tolerate it.

Grow milkweed using seeds or propagating by root cuttings. Root cuttings can be done in fall or early spring. Plant seeds in either late fall or early spring. Seeds can be collected in June from established plants or can be ordered online. Pretreatment of seeds increases germination. Soak seeds overnight in water. Cold moist stratification involves chilling the seeds at 40 degrees for up to three months in a damp medium such as sand and sphagnum moss. Planting in late fall also allows this exposure to moist cold conditions. The seeds germinate best in warmer parts of the year. Milkweeds prefer well-drained soil with full sun. When growing milkweed as a cultivated plant, you can trim it back to provide new fresh leaves for caterpillars all summer.

There is controversy surrounding the use of tropical milkweed (*Asclepias curassavica*) in that it may be responsible for the spread of a dangerous parasitic organism called *Ophryocystis elektroscirrha* (OE) and some researchers have expressed concern that tropical milkweed may interfere with butterfly migration. To be safe, gardeners might want to plant several of the native milkweed varieties and steer clear of tropical milkweed.

The Garden Gate is Open. Please Come In!



Dingly Dell, the garden of WCMGs Keith Blowers and Elaine Mills, part of the 2022 Garden Gate Tour. *Photo courtesy Keith Blowers and Elaine Mills.*

The Garden Gate Tour is our newest sanctioned project and it needs co-chairs and other sub-committee chairs if we are to continue to produce a tour each June. Please refer back to the article in the [July Garden Thyme](#) to know what positions are needed and then email [Nancy Sloan](#) if you want to volunteer for a Garden Gate job. The project committee will need to begin meeting soon in order to plan for the 2023 tour.

Meet the Trainees

OLIVIA HARRINGTON and LYNETTE TERRELL

Linda Bennett-Smith

My siblings and I were raised in the city before moving to the country with my Dad's parents when I was 11 (1964). Grandma Bennett had lots of flowers in her yard and Grandpa Bennett had a large vegetable garden. Back then, the vegetables were canned on a wood-burning stove and stored in the root cellar under the house. One spring, Grandma let me plant my first flower seeds, larkspur. I waited every day for the seeds to grow, only to realize that Grandpa thought they were weeds and mowed the flowers down. I helped Grandma weed her flower beds and listened to her talk about growing plants. That was the first and last year I helped in the flower beds. I have always had indoor plants for the past 45 years. Only in the past 26 years have I been able to have a flower and vegetable garden. I love the feel of soil in my hands and also ripping the roots of weeds out of the ground (my therapy for a bad day).



I enjoy learning about growing plants and that is why I joined Master Gardeners. I have met people with great knowledge of nature and I enjoy learning from them. I also want to help in keeping our planet green. I received my bachelor's, master's, and doctor's degrees in education at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. One of my goals is to teach others about the different aspects of gardening through the Arkansas Cooperation Extension.

Michael Maulden

After a 34-year career in Little Rock, I retired and moved to Fayetteville to be closer to my daughter, son-in-law, and their three sons. I've always had an interest in lawns and flower beds, but that interest expanded upon my retirement and when my wife and I bought our home in Fayetteville's Washington-Willow Historic District. My wife, Thu, is Vietnamese, so naturally she has a passion for Asian herbs, vegetables, and fruits. Our fall 2021 construction of a greenhouse expanded her growing season so she can now grow tropical plants year around. In the meantime, while learning about the sun patterns at our new home, I'm exploring and experimenting mostly with perennials in our newly developed flower beds. All of this led to our interest in becoming Master Gardeners, and we are blessed to be members of the Spring 2022 class.



While away from the garden, I enjoy time with my grandsons, traveling, motorcycling, bicycling, and woodworking, and I have recently taken up tennis.

Lindsay Neely

I'm from Monroe, Louisiana, and moved to Fayetteville to attend the UA in 2010. I loved the area so much that I stuck around! I grew up working in the garden with my parents, but in college I started collecting houseplants, which was something I could manage in dorms and apartments. This grew into a love and passion, so much so that I started a business selling houseplants, terrariums, and plant décor called Pink Fern Plant Co. I know a lot about houseplants, but I became interested in the Master Gardener program to learn more about outdoor gardening. I also feel that tending to nature helps me feel connected to my late mother who was an avid gardener as well as gifted artist. I'm thrilled to be a part of this community and learn more!



July Photo of the Month
"Birds in My Yard/Birds in the Garden"



FIRST PLACE
"Woody" by Geri Alvis



SECOND PLACE
"Holding Court" by Marion Stevens



THIRD PLACE
"Bird Rescue" by Diana Oliver

Project Report: VA Gardens



WCMG Annie Moore tends the VA Gardens.

GOOD NEWS! The VA Gardens project has been given the endorsement of the new VA officials. This garden provides food for veterans in need as well as serving as a teaching and healing site for veterans.

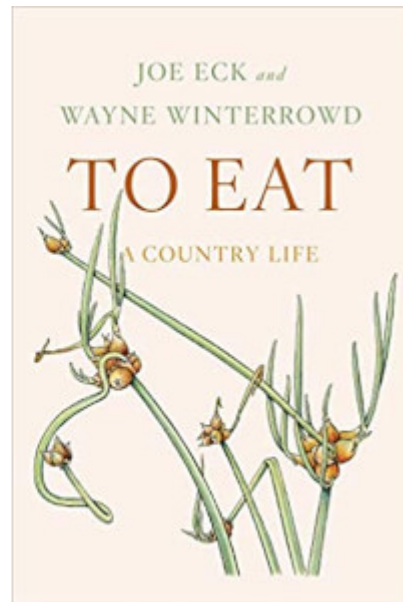
Workers are desperately needed to help this project catch up to its pre-covid award-winning standards. Scheduled workdays are Wednesdays 3:30–5:30 p.m. and Saturdays 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. You can also work other days to fit your schedule if needed.

To volunteer for VA Gardens, send your name, email, cell phone number, and preferred work days to [Nancy Sloan](#).

Thank you for helping this worthwhile project.

Book Review

ANITA BUKEY



Our Life in Gardens and To Eat
By Joe Eck and Wayne Winterrowd

Two New England gentlemen from Boston, Joe Eck and Wayne Winterrowd, surprised even themselves in 1974 when they joined forces, moved to Vermont, and bought a 28-acre patch of forested overgrown wilderness (Hardiness Zone 4–5) with a growing season of 15 days, thinking they could learn to become gardeners together. After all, they shared a common appreciation of Wagner's operas, fine food, adventurous travel, foreign languages, poetry, and most of all, an over-educated sense of humor, which permeates their books. How could anything go wrong? Just wait.

The first of two books, *Our Life In Gardens* reaches into a gypsy trunk of plants from agapanthus to wisteria, along with side essays on the proper clay pot or garden trowel to use. Details of more plants are examined: how to prune (little and often), proper fertilization, diseases, the therapeutic uses of plants, arcane terms explained, how, when, and why to transplant, soil amendments, and plants to avoid (all species of Hellebore are poisonous).

Eck and Winterrowd delight readers with descriptions of how they built their house and their barns, expanded the themed gardens, and why they argued about the validity of hardiness zones. Various chapters linger on favorite plants: rhododendron, lilacs, roses (not easy to grow, they hint), and readers pick up helpful hints they may want to try (or not). For example, the best and most delicate way to eat an artichoke, grow a banana tree, cultivate a bay tree for a supply of leaves (it takes years), carve wood from a camellia to make utensils and tools, tether Nubian goats for weed control, choose the sturdiest and sweetest smelling daffodil, and so forth. Ending the book leads Eck and Winterrowd to wonder about the eventual decline and demise of their garden over time. Who will take care of it eventually?

To Eat, the second in this series, tempts the reader into tasting, cooking, and experimenting with what gardeners grow, using ingredients from the kitchens or those that

are unfamiliar. Readers will also learn more about the pigs, chickens, calves, and cows they were raising for, well, slaughtering. How does one handle such a delicate task? Our Vermont gentlemen will tell you.

Moving on to sections on vegetables and fruits will have readers' mouths watering as these pages are full of recipes, starting with pies—specifically apple pie made with yellow transparent apples originally imported from Russia in 1870. They had less success growing brassicas like broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, and Brussels sprouts when a nasty fungus infected their acid soil for ten years. Undaunted, the authors taunt their readers with recipes using cauliflower, Savoy cabbage, chard, leeks, chicory, beets, endive, and carrots. Potatoes, they warn, must never be grown in manured soil as the skins will have scabby growths.

Unfortunately, part way through writing *To Eat*, Wayne Winterrowd passed away. Joe Eck went on to finish the book, complete with recipes from renowned chef and restaurateur Beatrice Tosti di Valminuta and beautiful illustrations by Bobbi Angell.

Gardening and Community Events

PAM BUTLER

AUGUST 4, 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. THADEN SCHOOL FIELD TRIP. With Marina McCoy. Wild Ones Ozark Chapter. Free; no registration required. [More information.](#)

AUGUST 4, 12:00–1:00 p.m. GROW YOUR OWN GROCERIES: EGGPLANT. Zoom program by UADA Extension Service staff. Free. [Registration information.](#)

AUGUST 6, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. NATURE-FORAGED TEAS. J. B. and Johnelle Hunt Nature Center, Springdale. [Registration information.](#)

AUGUST 15, 12:00–1:00 p.m. MASTER GARDENER MONDAY. Zoom program by UADA Extension Service staff Free. [Registration information.](#)

AUGUST 25, 8:15 a.m.–3:00 p.m. ISA CERTIFIED ARBORIST EXAM PREP WORKSHOP. Sponsored by the Arkansas Urban Forestry Council. Washington County Extension Office. Fees vary. [Registration information.](#)

Contact Information

The *Garden Thyme* email address is wcmgnewsletter@gmail.com. Please use this address for submissions and for questions and comments specific to the newsletter. For other needs, please contact the appropriate officer or chairperson as listed in your WCMG Member Resource Guide.

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Send all newsletter submissions to Judy Smith or Mary McCully.

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Banner photo of thyme courtesy [Lucy Meskill/Flickr.com](#)



WCMG Facebook Group (private)



WCMG Facebook Page (public)



WCMG Website



UA Cooperative Extension Service Website

The Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital or veteran status, genetic information or any other legally protected status and is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

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