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Washington County Master Gardeners Newsletter • June 2025



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JUNE MEETING

Picnic Time!

We hope to see you all at our annual picnic and meeting on June 3 at 6:30 p.m. at Bunch Park in Elkins. ([Here's a map.](#))

Our guest speaker is Maggie, the patron saint of the Elkins Community Garden sanctioned project.

Please bring a dish to share along with your own utensils, plate, cup, napkin, and lawn chair. (There are a few picnic tables but not enough to accommodate a group our size!)

This will be a great opportunity for a sneak peek of our Elkins sanctioned project—WCMG's featured project on this year's



Taking Care of Business

We will vote on this item at our June 3 monthly business meeting.

May 2025 Meeting Minutes

January 2025 Treasurer's Report

February 2025 Treasurer's Report

March 2025 Treasurer's Report

From Your President

ALFI ANDERSON

Dear Gardening Friends,

June has arrived, and with it, long sunny days, the hum of bees, and the joyful sounds of children out of school. It's a beautiful time to be in the garden—not only to tend our plants, but to grow memories with those we love.

One of the most important things we can do as gardeners is pass on what we know. Whether it's how to plant a seed, when to water, or how to tell a weed from a flower, sharing our knowledge with our children and grandchildren helps ensure that the love of gardening continues for generations. Each lesson in the soil becomes a part of the legacy we leave behind—a living connection from one generation to the next.



So, this summer, I encourage you to invite the young ones in your life to join you in the garden. Give them a trowel and a little patch to call their own. Let them get messy, dig deep, and discover the magic of watching something grow. If you're looking for easy ways to get kids involved, try planting a snack garden full of cherry tomatoes, peas, and strawberries. Or plant sunflowers in a circle to create a living fort. Give them a corner to experiment with—and watch them bloom right alongside their plants.

While we're out in the heat, caring for plants and each other, remember we all need watering, not just our gardens. Take the time to drink plenty of water, rest in the shade, and keep sunscreen and bug spray close by. The same rules apply to our grandkids and young helpers: protect their skin, encourage breaks, and make sure everyone stays safe while enjoying the garden.

As for the plants, June can be a tricky month. Some days bring rain; others bring dry winds. A few quick watering reminders:

- Water deeply and less often to encourage strong roots.
- Morning is best, you'll beat the heat and prevent mildew.
- Check the soil moisture a couple of inches down before watering.
- Mulch helps hold moisture and keeps weeds down win-win!

Now, mark your calendars! Our June meeting and annual picnic will be held on Tuesday, June 3, at 6:30 p.m. at Bunch Park in Elkins. This is a great time to enjoy food and fellowship under the open sky. Please remember to bring your own utensils, plate, cup, napkin, and a dish to share. There are a few picnic tables, but you will want to bring a chair to ensure that you will have a seat. And while you're there, you'll get a chance to see all the wonderful work being done by the Elkins sanctioned project crew as they prepare for our upcoming Garden Gate Tour on June 14. We are so proud of their efforts and excited to share them with you.

Thank you for all the care you give—to your gardens, to each other, and to the next generation of gardeners. I look forward to seeing you all soon, trowels in hand and hearts full of green.

Last Call for Garden Gate Tour Volunteers

DANNA GREAR
Garden Gate Tour Committee



Photo by [Lukáš Kadava](#) on [Unsplash](#)

We are quickly approaching our 2025 WCMG Garden Gate Tour on Saturday, June 14, 9:00

a.m.–4:00 p.m. This year's tour promises to be spectacular! Don't forget to like and share our WCMG posts on social media. Also, Charity at White River Nursery has been featuring some of our tour gardens on their [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages. Take a look and share!

If you are wanting to volunteer on tour day but have not yet been notified of an assignment, please text Danna Grear at 479-841-6402.

Our next volunteer training is Monday, June 2, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the Extension Office. If you volunteer on tour day and attend a training meeting, you will receive a complimentary ticket to the tour.

Lastly, make sure to invite your friends, coworkers, and family, buy a ticket, and come out and enjoy!

2025 Garden Gate Tour Sneak Peeks

JUDY SMITH

The annual Garden Gate Tour, established by WCMG in 2019, is scheduled for **Saturday, June 14, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** This year the tour features six home gardens, a WCMG sanctioned project, and an environmental non-profit organization. All are in Elkins or Fayetteville.

Tickets for the Garden Gate Tour are available for purchase online at the WCMG website's [Garden Gate Tour webpage](#).

The *Garden Thyme* will feature these gardens in four issues from March through June.

Photos courtesy of the Elkins Community Center sanctioned project crew and Beaver Watershed Alliance.



Elkins Community Garden

The Elkins Community Garden project was sanctioned in 2014 to enhance the gardens surrounding the Elkins Community Center that serves as a hub for local activities and events. The center is the home base for the WCMG project, which features a button bush, elephant ears, cosmos, roses, ninebark, dogfennel, red twig dogwood, grasses, irises, and a variety of other plants.

In 2018 WCMG, with support from the City of Elkins, installed a sprinkler system for the community center gardens. As you view the gardens, you can envision the time and effort in years of watering with multiple garden hoses in the unpredictable Arkansas weather.

The success of the Elkins Community Center project resulted in expansion to include gardens at the Elkins Public Library, the Bunch Park flagpole, and the Elkins Senior Center (which is a work in progress). The WCMG team plants and maintains multiple beds throughout these locations.

In Bunch Park, a garden surrounding the flagpole is dedicated to veterans and features a red, white, blue, and gold color theme. A variety of pollinator-friendly plant materials are featured. The focal point of the garden is Margaret America ("Maggie"), who always dresses for the season. Maggie and the flagpole garden participate in Flag Day, the fall season, Veterans Day, and Christmas on the River.



The Elkins Public Library gardens include a rain garden, a pollinator garden, and a paver path for children to walk into the library. Large lilac bushes, an oakleaf hydrangea, and hostas are among the highlighted plants. In addition, there are some vegetable plantings and teepees for the youth to enjoy.



Beaver Watershed Alliance (BWA)

“Bring Back the Prairie” – A Project with BWA and the City of Elkins

Arkansas once had over 2 million acres of naturally open grassland habitat in the early 1800s, referred to as prairies. Today, less than 0.5 percent of that grassland remains—less than 430 acres. BWA is working with the City of Elkins to restore a native prairie on three acres adjacent to the Elkins Community Center. The project is in year one. Native plants will soak up rainwater and provide habitat while also serving as a learning lab for local schools, city residents, and visitors.



“Riparian Rejuvenation” – Restoring the Banks of the East Fork of the White River in an Urban Community

In March 2024, BWA partnered with the City of Elkins and more than 60 community volunteers to plant 160 native tree and shrub seedlings along an important riparian zone on the East Fork of the White River at Bunch Park in Elkins. Healthy riparian buffers are made up of a diverse ecosystem of native plants along a waterway. Native species planted include chinquapin oak, willow oak, eastern redbud, and arrowwood viburnum.

Notes from a Garden Tour

TALYA TATE BOERNER



Photo by Talya Tate Boerner.

Can you believe we are only a few days from the 2025 Garden Gate Tour? Today I'm reflecting on my time as a garden host with the State Master Gardener Garden Tour hosted by WCMG in 2022. Click [HERE](#) to read about my fabulous experience! (This link will take you to Talya's blog on her [Grace, Grits and Gardening](#) website.)

Scenes from Mock Park

Images submitted by CHRIS BELL



WCMGs Luanne Diffin (left) and Karen Takemoto discuss a chinquapin tree newly planted by the Mock Park crew. WCMGs Linda Hall and Linda Morrow offer assistance from a distance.



Some lovely blooms showed off at Mock Park this spring!

Meet the Trainees

OLIVIA HARRINGTON and LYNETTE TERRELL

Steve Shearman

I have always admired those who garden or farm, being so close to nature and participating in the traditions of working the earth, planting seeds, understanding the seasons, and witnessing the miracle of a harvest. Getting one's hands in the soil always seemed medicinal. I come from a family of urbanites who never grew up tilling the earth, knowing the thrill of digging for new potatoes with their hands in the soft ground, or smelling the beautiful scent of freshly picked tomatoes.



Over the years, moving often, I mostly attempted to grow tomatoes if I had a backyard.

However, the tomatoes always ended up deformed, discolored, and unappetizing. I was equally unsuccessful with flower beds or potted flowers—the wrong kind or the wrong location.

I believed my fortunes had changed when I married my wife, who is from England. As we explored England while dating, it seemed like the English could grow anything anywhere. In England, I saw the most magnificent backyard “gardens”—lush grass, flowers galore, and perfectly manicured hedges. I figured, when I married my English-born wife, that I was marrying a wonderful lady and getting a green thumb. I quickly learned that my wife is wonderful . . . but has no green thumb.

When I considered how to spend my time in retirement, I knew exactly what I wanted to do—finally learn how to garden properly. I had vaguely heard of the Master Gardener program and signed up, unsure of what I was getting into.

So far, just four months in, I am loving the Master Gardener program. The 40 hours of classroom instruction were overwhelming given the vast scope of horticulture. But now, as I get rooted in my sponsored projects, I can sense the genius of the Master Gardener program: 40 hours of classroom training, followed by the required volunteer hours at sanctioned projects, where I can now apply what I've learned in the classroom on-the-job style, alongside seasoned gardeners. This experience has deepened my appreciation for gardening, fostered a sense of community, and ignited my desire to cultivate a thriving garden of my own. I am excited to continue exploring the world of gardening.

Janet B. Carson Scholarship Winner

ALFI ANDERSON
WCMG President



Springdale Har-Ber High School senior Luke Walker is presented the Janet B. Carson Scholarship by WCMG President Alfi Anderson.

Luke Walker, a senior at Har-Ber High School in Springdale, was recently awarded the \$2,000 Janet B. Carson Scholarship through County 76. I had the distinct pleasure of presenting this award to him at his high school.

Luke plans to attend the University of Arkansas, where he will major in crop and soil science. His long-term goal is to become a plant breeder, contributing to agricultural advancements through his studies and future career.

I'd also like to take a moment to thank our Master Gardeners. When you donate to the silent auctions at the Master Gardener state conference, this is exactly what your generosity supports. The funds raised help outstanding young people like Luke pursue their education and passions in horticulture.

So, congratulations to Luke—and heartfelt thanks to each of you for making this possible!

**May Photo of the Month Contest:
"Shade Plants and Shade Gardens"**



FIRST PLACE: TIE
"A Pretty Pair" by Pam Butler



FIRST PLACE: TIE

"Hectgor Guards the Hostas" by Delcina Cunico



THIRD PLACE

"Dancing Lilies" by Karen Hanna-Towne

The June Photo of the Month contest theme is "Container Gardens." Deadline to enter is June 15. Contest details are available on the [WCMG website](#).

[Here's a link to the 2025 photo contest themes.](#)

COMPOST CORNER

Here's the Scoop

ADRIANA TREADWAY
Compost Demonstration Site Team



Members of the Compost Demonstration Site team on a recent tour of the City of Fayetteville's compost and recycling facility.

Why should we reduce what we send to the landfill?

Fayetteville currently sends 77,000 tons of garbage a year to the EcoVista landfill in Tontitown. When this landfill cannot take any more of our refuse, the garbage will have to be sent out of state, costing residents significantly more. The goal of the City of Fayetteville is to reduce and/or divert the amount of garbage sent to the landfill by 40%.

How can we help achieve this goal?

Reduce/divert/compost food waste. Food waste makes up 18% of the garbage sent to the landfill from homes and restaurants. Such an abundance of organic material increases methane emissions in the landfill as well as attracts rodents and other animals.

- Reduce what you throw out by using up the food you buy, ordering reasonable portions at restaurants, and buying what you and your family are likely to consume.
- Donate or upcycle food that you will not use.
- If you have a compost pile at home, compost fruit and vegetable peels, eggs, and other compostable items. If you do not, please consider getting a three- or five-gallon bucket with a tight lid, put your food waste in it—including cooked meats, dairy, and cooked leftover food— and take your bucket full of compostables to one of the food-waste drop-off stations available 24 hours a day in Fayetteville. [Click here for a list of foods accepted for composting, as well as the drop-off locations.](#) NOTE: There is a food-waste drop-off station at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Fayetteville, where the WCMG monthly are held.

Shop carefully. Food is not the only item that causes problems in the landfill. Clothes and fabrics are a significant problem as well. The advice from the City is to shop mindfully and buy better quality clothing that lasts longer rather than cheaper items that may last a season or even less. When clothing is donated to charities, most of it is discarded due to stains, tears, or poor quality overall. This clothing is baled and sent to other countries, where more often than not it is left to rot because it cannot be used.

Dispose of hazardous chemicals and materials properly. This would reduce the amount sent to

the landfill as well as keep our waterways cleaner. The City of Fayetteville has a drop-off trailer open every Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the corner of 15th Street and Happy Hollow Road in Fayetteville. This drop-off station is free to everyone, including those who do not reside in Fayetteville. [Here's a link to a list of accepted items](#) NOTE: Latex paints are NOT accepted.

Recycle properly by following the current regulations of the city you live in Contamination in recycling, i.e., inclusion of items that do not belong, makes the baled materials more difficult to sell to the wholesalers who buy recycling materials. An example of contamination would be to stuff your recyclable mixed paper into a plastic grocery bag and then put that bag in your recycling bin for pickup. Even a small amount of contamination can lead to the rejection of entire loads of recyclables.

The last scoop!

The City of Fayetteville has FREE mulch at the City of Fayetteville compost facility at 1708 S. Armstrong Avenue. [Here's a map](#). FREE old leaf mulch can also be requested. This partially decomposed leaf mulch will enrich the soil, help retain moisture, regulate temperature, and suppress weeds.

Hours of operation for the compost facility:

- Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:00 a.m. –3:00 p.m.
- 1st Saturday of the month, 8:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
- 2nd Saturday of the month, April to October, 8:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

[Here's a link for more information about the City of Fayetteville compost program](#)

Gardening and Community Events

PAM BUTLER

This calendar features events close to home. To stay in the know about MG and UADA gardening-related activities across Arkansas, [sign up for the state calendar of events](#) sent by the Extension Service headquarters in Little Rock.

JUNE 1, 2:00–3:00 p.m. DESIGNING A NATURAL GARDEN . Botanical Garden of the Ozarks (BGO). \$10 member/ \$15 non-member. [For more information](#).

JUNE 1, 2:00–3:00 p.m. BIRDS, BUTTERFLIES, AND BLUESTEM: GARDENING FOR NATIVE WILDLIFE. White River Nursery. 5635 E. Huntsville Road, Fayetteville. Free. [Registration information](#).

JUNE 2–7. BUFFALO RIVER FLOAT. Hosted by the Ozark Society. [For more information and pricing](#).

JUNE 3, 9:00–11:30 a.m. CAVE SPRINGS RAIN GARDEN VOLUNTEER DAY. Illinois River Watershed Partnership, 221 S. Main Street, Cave Springs. [For more information and registration](#).

JUNE 4, 12:15–1:45 p.m. MOBILE PHONE PHOTOGRAPHY TECHNIQUES. Shiloh Museum of Ozark History, Springdale. Free. [For more information](#).

JUNE 5–7, STATE MG CONFERENCE. Searcy.

JUNE 5, 5:30–6:30 p.m. OZARK GREEN THUMBS LECTURE SERIES: WINTER

GARDEN PLANNING. Washington County Cooperative Extension Office. \$5. [Registration information.](#)

JUNE 6–8. 35th ANNUAL BAT-O-RAMA. Devil’s Den State Park. Free. [Schedule of events.](#)

JUNE 6, 9:00–11:00 a.m. BIRDING ON BEAVER LAKE KAYAK TOUR . Hobbs State Park. Free. All equipment is provided. [For more information.](#)

JUNE 7, 8:40–11:00 a.m. OZARK EXPLORATION: BIRDING AROUND THE BENDS. Ozark Natural Science Center, Huntsville. By donation. [Registration information.](#)

JUNE 7, 9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. WATER QUALITY WORKSHOP: FIELD TOUR AT THE PRAIRIE GROVE BATTLEFIELD STATE PARK. Illinois River Watershed Partnership at Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park, 506 E. Douglas Street, Prairie Grove. [For more information and registration.](#)

JUNE 7, 10:00–11:00 a.m. NATIVE BEES: PROPAGATING PROLIFIC, PEACEFUL POLLINATORS. White River Nursery, 5635 E. Huntsville Road, Fayetteville. Free. [Registration information.](#)

JUNE 7–8. SUMMER FUN WITH FUNGI. Ozark Natural Science Center, Huntsville. Ticket prices vary. [Registration information.](#)

JUNE 8, 1:00–3:30 p.m. WATERCOLOR BOUQUET. BGO. \$125 member/\$135 non-member. [Registration information.](#)

JUNE 14, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. GARDEN GATE TOUR . [To purchase tickets.](#)

JUNE 14, 9:00–9:45 a.m. WOODY PLANT WALK. Devil’s Den State Park. Free. [For more information.](#)

JUNE 16, 12:00–1:00 p.m. MASTER GARDENER MONDAY. Zoom gardening program plus MG event updates with Randy Forst, UADA consumer horticulture/Master Gardener coordinato. Free. Registration not required. [Email Randy for the Zoom link](#) OR [sign up for the calendar of events](#) sent out by the Extension Service headquarters in Little Rock.

JUNE 19, 9:00–11:00 a.m. SPRING CREEK VOLUNTEER DAY. Illinois River Watershed Partnership at Luther George Park, 300 Park Street, Springdale. [For more information and registration.](#)

JUNE 19, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. POLLINATOR GARDEN TOURS. Hobbs State Park. Free. [For more information.](#)

JUNE 20, 11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. BUTTERFLY HIKE ON SINKING STREAM TRAIL. Hobbs State Park. Free. [For more information.](#)

JUNE 20, 2:30–3:00 p.m. 2025 POLLINATOR WEEK: WHAT BEE WOULD YOU BE?. Devil’s Den State Park. Free. [For more information.](#)

JUNE 21, 8:40–11:00 a.m. JUNE 2025 LAKE FAYETTEVILLE EXPLORATION: WATERSHED WANDERINGS. Ozark Natural Science Center, Lake Fayetteville, 599 E. Lakeview Dr., Springdale. By donation. [For more information.](#)

JUNE 21, 10:00–11:00 a.m. BEYOND THE STING: THE LIFE OF WASPS AS POLLINATORS AND PREDATORS. Presented by Wild Ones at White River Nursery. Free. [Registration information.](#)

JUNE 21, 2:00–4:00 p.m. CONQUER THE KITCHEN: SUMMER SALADS. Fayetteville Public Library, Walker Family Teaching Kitchen. Registration opens May 31. [Registration information.](#)

JUNE 21 and 28, 2:00–3:00 p.m. MUSHROOMS GROWING 101 WITH BLOOMING HOPE MUSHROOMS. Fayetteville Public Library. Walker Community room. Free. [For more information.](#)

JUNE 21, 2:30–3:00 p.m. 2025 POLLINATOR WEEK: MIGHTY MORPHERS. Devil’s Den State Park. Free. [For more information.](#)

JUNE 22, 10:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m. ABC'S OF ARKANSAS SUMMER MUSHROOMS.

Ozark Folkways. \$65. [Registration information.](#)

JUNE 27, 7:00–8:00 p.m. FRIENDS OF HOBBS SPEAKER SERIES: TRAIL TREES WITH DON WELLS. Hobbs State Park. Free. [For more information.](#)

JUNE 28, 9:00–9:30 a.m. NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY ON THE MONUMENT TRAILS HIKE. Devil's Den State Park. Free. [For more information.](#)

JUNE 28, 10:00–11:00 a.m. SAVING THE ARKANSAS STATE BUTTERFLY: THE DIANA FRITILLARY PROJECT. White River Nursery. Free. [Registration information.](#)

JUNE 28, 10:00–11:30 a.m. WILSON PARK WALKING TOUR. Fayetteville Public Library at Wilson Park, Fayetteville. Free. [For more 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 listed in your WCMG Member Resource Guide.

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