

*WILLIAMSON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION*

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# THE PERENNIAL

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WILLIAMSON COUNTY  
**EXTENSION**  
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE



Volume 5 | August 2018



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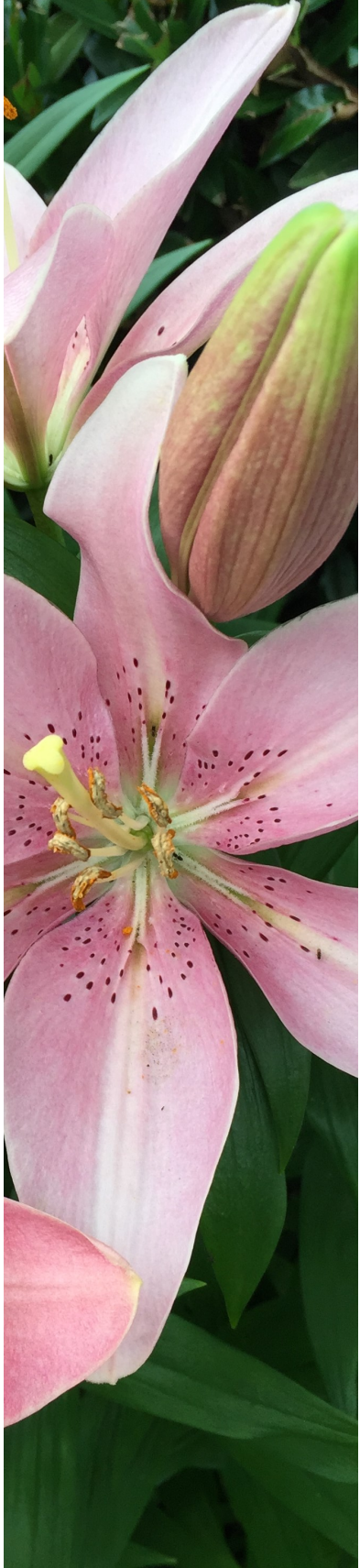
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**VOL\_ NTEE\_ Means nothing unless U R in it**



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**Photography:** Rick Borchert

# OUR ROOTS

## **Fun time of the year in TN**

Now that everyone has their gardens in with help from Mother Nature and the rain, it is time to focus on some summer fun. Family picnics top the list along with fireworks, bands playing in the parks almost every weekend, special summer recipes appearing on dinner tables, along with occasional festivals and fairs which are not to be missed. While enjoying the harvest from our gardens, keep in mind some Master Gardener events that are coming up soon.

The **Williamson County Fair** will be starting August 3<sup>rd</sup> with much being offered by our Master Gardeners. There will be two displays again this year. One is the booth on the main floor in the usual spot. The large Horticultural display on the Arena floor features a Butterfly House. This display is a must-see. As there has been much work going on for some time now to prepare for a successful event, make sure when attending the Fair to visit each display; you will be pleasantly surprised.

The annual picnic will take place later in the fall. Time and place are to be determined, but food, fun and a great WCMGA get-together is sure to be enjoyed. If you have not been to one in the past, please try to join us this fall.

This year there is a contest to design our new shirt for 2019. All WCMGA members can enter a design that will be voted on by a panel of judges. The new shirts are expected to be ready by October.

There will be no August membership meeting.

We will be choosing a nominating committee soon to find replacements for Board members whose terms are up by year end. The committee will have the nominations ready by the September meeting.

I hope you are enjoying the summer. While TN is special all year long, this fall looks very promising. Throughout the remainder of the year, TN is the place to be.

Thanks for all you do.

**WCMGA President**

*Jack Melnick*



# BEE BOMBS

**Even bees have plants that make ‘em  
weak in the knees**

*By Amy Dismukes*

Bringing bees into the landscape is actually a pretty easy task. By following a few simple directives, you can have a garden full of little buzzing buddies. Choose bee bombs (preferred plants) that are suited for both short and long-tongued bees in your region. Limit the use of bee-toxic insecticides. Provide some shelter in your garden. Bees need protection from the elements too. And create nesting sites in order to support the entire life cycle, from egg to larva to adult.

One might be hesitant to attract stinging insects into the garden, but keep in mind, stinging is a defense mechanism and is generally only used when the insect itself feels threatened. Say for instance, you begin wildly swinging your arms around and slapping at a honey bee ... you should probably expect to be stung. Now, if you're chill with bees, they're generally going to be pretty chill with you.

If you've ever watched a bee as it forages a flower, you've noticed it doesn't really care about you. These guys are just doing their thing—searching for pollen and nectar. They're not looking for a fight. Additionally, and get ready for this one, NOT ALL BEES STING!

When we think about bees, we immediately think of the honey bee. Although a critical part of our food



***Bumble Bee foraging Anise Hyssop***

***photo by Amy Dismukes***

system, the honey bee is not the only pollinating bee out there. We've got all sorts of guys working on our behalf. There's the bumble bees, the cuckoo bees, the sweat bees, the leafcutters, the masons...And then there's the other natives. Overall, Tennessee currently hosts 55 different genera of bees. Surprised?

The most important thing that bees do is pollinate. Pollination is needed for plants to reproduce. It's said that about one in every three bites of food you consume was pollinated by a bee. Pollinators in general are crucial for the biodiversity of our planet.

By providing bee food and shelter in your landscape, you're creating a new habitat. These new habitats may become very important, as natural habitats become less abundant. Choose a selection of flowering plants that appeal to all types of bees are suited for our region of Tennessee, and bloom at different times throughout the season. Bees tend to go for bluish purples, whites and yellows. Include some native plants as well. Exotics that produce lots of nectar, like butterfly bush, are great for attracting bees into your yard, but often need



***Bumble Bees foraging Butterfly weed*** ***photo by Amy Dismukes***

to be supplemented with natives because they may not be able to support the entire life cycle (and can often be considered invasive). Check out the plant list below for a few ideas.

Try and limit the use of insecticides to ensure that those you've invited aren't exposed to poisons that could potentially harm. That includes lawn treatments folks!



Bumble Bee visiting Asiatic Poppy photo by Amy Dismukes

Low doses of insecticides can disorient and even disrupt navigation skills, causing a bee to lose its way. Practicing IPM, or integrated pest management, is the best way to limit the use of insecticides. Go low-toxicity when possible.

While most folks aren't equipped to raise bees, creating a nesting habitat is really easy. Natives nest in old wood, tree cavities or even in the ground. These nests can be easily replicated with a few supplies and tools. There are many sites online that can provide detail. Check out 'Nests for Native Bees', a factsheet available online via The Xerces Society. Providing shelter can be as simple as creating a garden that is guarded from the elements.

And remember, you don't have to dig up the whole backyard in order to attract bees. Use additional flowering plants to supplement your existing landscape by installing them amongst anchor plants or utilizing a container system for mobility. And remember, we all come from the earth, return to the earth... and in between, we garden (even bees).

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	ANNUAL or PERENNIAL
pale purple coneflower	<i>Echinacea pallida</i>	P
common yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	P
Walker's low catmint	<i>Nepeta x faassenii</i> 'Walker's Low'	P
sunflowers	<i>Helianthus annuus</i>	A
anise hyssop	<i>Agastache foeniculum</i> 'Blue Fortune'	P
bee balm	<i>Monarda punctata</i>	P
purple coneflower	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	P
black-eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia</i> spp.	reseeds
Asters	<i>Symphotrichum</i> spp.	P
Joe-Pye weed	<i>Eutrochium</i> spp.	P
goldenrods	<i>Solidago</i> spp.	P
butterfly bush	<i>Buddleja davidii</i>	P
butterfly weed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	P
fennel	<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	reseeds
lantana	<i>Lantana camara</i>	A
borage	<i>Borago officinalis</i>	reseeds
oregano	<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	P
sweet alyssum	<i>Lobularia maritima</i>	A
lion's tle	<i>Leonotis leonurus</i>	P
lavendar	<i>Lavandula</i> spp.	P
white snake root	<i>Ageratina altissima</i>	P



# GARDEN COMPANIONS

## TN NATURE CONSERVANCY

*By S. Tucker Runyon*



***Lower Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge***

***photo by Paul Kingsbury © TNC***

The Nature Conservancy's Tennessee chapter celebrates its 40th year this December. The Nature Conservancy is the world's largest nonprofit conservation organization. In Tennessee alone, they have purchased and protect over 320,000 acres of land. But they don't stop there. They are now active in all fifty states and over seventy countries.

In October of 1951, the Nature Conservancy, renamed in 1950 from the Ecologists Union, was incorporated in the District of Columbia as a non-profit organization. It's roots began quite a bit earlier in 1915 as the 'Ecological Society of America '. If you visit their website, you will be quite impressed as you read the "History and Milestones" page listing their major achievements through the years. The last (currently) listed entry on the page is the year 2015. That year, the conservancy helped to conserve 257 square miles of wildlife habitats including rivers and forests in the Cascade mountain and Blackfoot River region.

So, a bit more about the Nature Conservancy. Their mission statement is simple yet powerful: "To conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends." What does this effort look like? For one, they work with farmers to promote sustainable water management and use. The results driven staff, including around 600 scientists, make a major impact and bring the excellence of the mission statement to the field. They

do so by targeting where they work based on the latest scientific research of what is most beneficial to people and nature. From helping restore healthy coral reefs in Florida, reducing the damage of storm surges, securing elephant habitats in Africa, improving water supplies and watersheds in Latin America, to urban forestry in Melbourne, and conservation trips to Asia Pacific, not much, it seems, has escaped their influence.

To bring it a bit closer to home, in Tennessee alone, their list of accomplishments is impressive. The Nature Conservancy boasts twenty nine state Natural areas, thirteen wildlife management areas, and three wildlife refuges that they either helped to expand or create in the Volunteer state! If you visit their website, which I strongly encourage, you can find a map marked by "pins" of every piece of land or water that they help protect. For those interested, the website also includes a "Carbon Calculator." By entering a bit of information, you can get the "carbon footprint estimate" for your household.

Last but not least, I encourage readers to consider donating or becoming members. With several ways to give, they have made it easy to contribute. The Tennessee chapter is celebrating four decades this year, so go out and tell your friends about this amazing conservation organization and spread the word!



***Chestnut Mountain Overlook***

***photo by Paul Kingsbury © TNC***

# GARDEN COMPANIONS

## BUILD IT AND THEY WILL COME

*By Cliff Morrison*

In the movie “Field of Dreams”, Kevin Costner’s character heard the message, “Build it and they will come.” He built a baseball diamond on his farm, and as a result, baseball legends reunited at the field and played the game again. My epiphany was not so dramatic. In a Master Gardner Intern Class the topic of discussion was earthworms and their benefits to the soil. Someone mentioned, “Worm Tower” and my curiosity was elevated. Researching the term, I discovered a video about

unless you wish to attract other two, four, six, eight or more legged critters to your bed.

### Building the Tower

**Materials:** 1 two-foot section of 6 inch PVC (square cut on each end); 1 6-inch PVC Hub x Hub Coupling; 1 7-inch square piece of fiberglass screen mesh.

**Tools Required:** 1 heavy duty pair of scissors; a saw (I used an electric miter saw but any saw that will cut the PVC is fine); 1 drill, I suggest a power drill; 1 half-inch drill bit (Forstner or Spade bit); tape measure; 1 coarse rasp; 1 sharpie; 1 mallet; 1 straight edge (optional depending on how neatly you wish to holes to align).

**Process:** Cut two inches off one end of the PVC pipe and set the 2 inch section aside for later. Measure 12 inches from the cut end and draw a level line around the pipe. This line marks the level of the ground when the pipe is buried. Draw evenly spaced lines down the pipe from the level line to the cut end, ten lines should work fine. These will be guides to drill holes. Drill randomly spaced holes along each line. I spaced my holes no closer than one inch. You may remove any burrs created by the drilling; however, they will not injure the worms. Just be sure the holes are open. Using the 2-inch section of pipe



**Worm tower photo Cliff Morrison**

is producing very well, in spite of the heavy clay soil. Not scientific, but thus far I am pleased with the visible results. Instead of a “worm tower”, I am referring to it as an earthworm habitat.

It is simple to build and use. The bill of materials and the process can be found below. The screen is important,





previously cut as a pattern, trim the screen about ½ inch larger than the pipe circumference. Use a wood rasp to create a slight bevel on one end of the 2 inch section. Place the screen over one end of the PVC Hub Coupling and trim the screen ½ inch larger. Place the beveled end of the 2 inch section on the screen and with a mallet, drive the screen and two inch section into the Hub Coupling until the screen is at the mid-point of the PVC Hub. File any internal protrusions or notches from the inside of the open end of the Hub. This step will ease the effort of applying and removing the cap from the pipe. Place the cap over the end of the pipe.

## Installation of worm tower

Dig an 8 inch hole slightly deeper than 12 inches in the soil. Place the end of the pipe with the drilled holes into the ground. Be sure all holes are below the soil surface, which should leave approximately 9 inches above the surface. Place and lightly tamp the soil around pipe.

## Feed the worms

Place a handful of damp shredded paper in the pipe, wetting the paper until it is soggy. Deposit a half cup of shredded vegetable and/or fruit scraps followed by more wet shredded paper. (Coffee grounds and shredded coffee filters work well). A couple of table spoons of sand or grit will assist the worms' digestion. Place

the top on the pipe. The worms will find it. I revisit the pipe once per week and add shredded scraps, shredded paper and water. I also add water every few days when there has been no rain. Water through the screen.

Instead of a worm tower, I am calling this a mini-composting center. It is good for about 4 square feet. The worms enter the tower through the drilled holes, consume the scraps then exit to spread castings in the soil. You probably will not see the worms unless you are digging in the bed, or you view the bed at night. Earthworms come to the soil surface at night to mate and acquire oxygen.



# WCMGA Monthly Meetings

**SEPTEMBER 10**

## **Polly Rooker—BACKYARD HABITATS**

Polly Rooker is a Watchable Wildlife and Waterfowl biologist with the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency (TWRA). She has more than 35 years of service with TWRA and is a lifelong member of the Tennessee Ornithology Society. Polly will discuss different birds that we can find in our backyards including 2 types of bluebirds, 3 types of woodpeckers, finches, and sparrows. She will also talk about the Northern Mockingbird and how it came to be our state bird. Polly says, "Everybody loves birds. They're a vital part of our natural ecosystem. They're pretty. They sing. I think they add a lot to your backyard and to your life."

**OCTOBER 8**

## **STATE OF THE ASSOCIATION**

This month the WCMGA will meet to discuss association business.

All members are invited to come and participate.

**NOVEMBER 12**

## **ANNUAL HOLIDAY DINNER AND AWARD PRESENTATION**



# THE BARK

## August

- Harvest vegetables continuously to stretch their season
- Sprinkle compost starter to speed up composting for fall soil building
- Prune summer-blooming shrubs (hydrangea, clethra, caryopteris) after flowers finish
- Plant garlic now for spring harvests
- Dig gently to harvest potatoes a few plants at a time
- Look forward to something different next spring: try alliums in your bulb garden
- Sow seeds of cool-weather herbs (chives, parsley, garlic chives, cilantro and dill)
- Plan perennial beds for fall and winter color with ornamental grasses, fall-blooming bulbs and hardy heaths and heathers
- Enjoy fall fragrance by planting autumn clematis (*Clematis paniculata*), flowering tobacco and annual stock
- Keep cool during summer's dog days with a shade garden embroidered with hostas and hardy ferns
- Color up your bulb garden with fall bloomers (*lycoris*, fall crocus, *colchicum*)



- Plant bare root trees and shrubs
- Order sweet pea seedlings for fall planting
- Plant herbs and groundcovers as the weather cools

## October

- Plant or repair lawns
- Plant ornamental grasses
- Cover perennial, vegetable, bulb, and strawberry beds for winter
- Plant winter- and spring-blooming bulbs
- Pre-chill tulips and hyacinths for indoor forcing
- Plant balled-and-burlapped or container fruit trees
- Cut back on feeding houseplants (do not feed dormant houseplants)
- Rake lawn to remove debris
- Sow seeds for frost-tolerant perennials
- Plant container roses
- Plant balled-and-burlapped or container trees, shrubs, and vines
- Prune fall-flowering shrubs just after bloom
- Protect tender plants from frost

## September

- Set out transplants of cool-weather vegetables
- Prune cane fruits such as raspberries and blackberries
- Plant winter pansies and fall annuals (*calendula*, *dianthus*, ornamental cabbage and kale)
- Plant peonies
- Plant fall-blooming bulbs to brighten up fading window boxes, planters and in drifts among ornamental grasses
- Continue to harvest herbs and flowers for drying
- Divide peonies, bearded iris and other spring- and summer-blooming perennials

# CONTINUED GROWTH

## Speakers' Bureau Training – August 22nd, 2018

A Speakers' Bureau meeting/training session will be held on Wednesday, August 22, at 10am at the Ag Center in Franklin. Please RSVP to Mary Pemberton ([marypem@gmail.com](mailto:marypem@gmail.com)) if you will be attending this session. Also, please let Mary know if you cannot attend a day-time training and would be interested in an evening session.

*Remember that you cannot represent the WCMGA as a speaker until you complete this training with Amy.*

## WCMGA Library programs

**Franklin Library**— free program—must pre-register

August 27—Amy Dismukes—Urban Trees for Middle Tennessee (register: [here](#))

September 10—Barry Yarbrough—Weeds, Weeds, Weeds (register: [here](#))

September 17—Amy Dismukes—Seed Savers Unite (register: [here](#))

**Brentwood Library**— free program—must pre-register

August 30—Barry Yarbrough—Weeds, Weeds, Weeds (register: [here](#))

September 13—Mary Pemberton & Marty Savouray—Trees of Tennessee (register: [here](#))

A new adventure for WCMGA this year will be a Booth at the Tennessee State Fair. We have been offered a spot in the main building and are currently developing plans to showcase our Association and what we are all about.

With the large volume of traffic at the Fair, we are sure to turn some heads with what is planned.

**SAVE THE DATES FOR VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

**September 7-16**



# CONTINUED GROWTH

## WCMGA SHIRT DESIGN CONTEST



### General Guidelines:

- As a member in good standing, you may enter a design as many times as you like.
- Each entry will be judged independently.
- It can be a tee shirt, polo type or a button down.
- The shirt will be for 2019 and hopefully ready for the October Association meeting.
- Include color of the shirt and style along with your design.
- Your design can be the front of the shirt or the back or both.
- You can enter a digital design, hand drawn version or any media you are comfortable with. It must be clear and legible.
- The design must promote the WCMGA and be Master Gardener related.
- The contest starts at the end of the July 9<sup>th</sup> Association meeting and is over August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018 by end of day. Judges will convene for a meeting shortly afterwards and pick 3 designs. Those 3 will be presented to the members at the September 10<sup>th</sup> Association meeting for the membership to vote on.
- The winner will be announced at that same September meeting.
- Winner will receive a \$25.00 gift certificate to a restaurant of their choice.

**There are a couple of ways to enter a design:**

**Email to:** [wcmgainc@gmail.com](mailto:wcmgainc@gmail.com) with "Tee Shirt Contest" in the subject line

**Mail to:** WCMGA Shirt Contest at [4215 Long Ln Suite 200 Franklin, TN 37064](#)

**Print it:** Place in a sealed envelope and place in the mail box at the AG center.

**All entries must be postmarked no later than 8/13/18 or  
placed in the mail box by the end of 8/13/18.**

### JUDGING FINE PRINT:

- The winning design of the new shirt for our organization will be determined by a panel of judges made up from 1 or 2 Board members and 3 or 4 Association members.
- The judges will be chosen at the July Association meeting. There will be a minimum of 4 and maximum of 6 members.
- One person will be designated as chairperson by either volunteering for the role or being appointed by the President.

# FOR SPROUTS

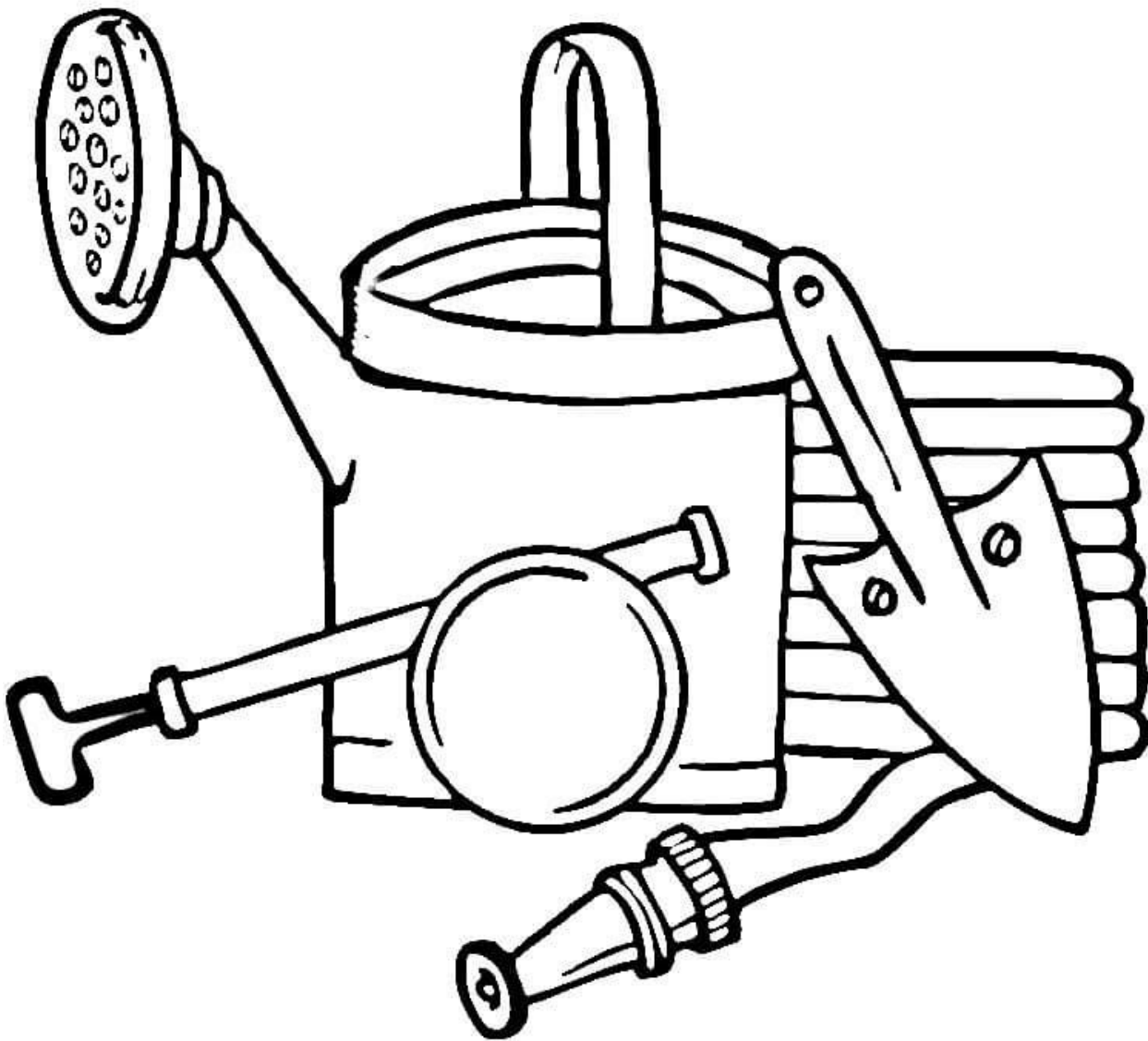
## Riddles

What do all of the vegetables in the garden wish for most?

*Answer: Peas on Earth!*

Why can you never keep a secret in the garden?

*Answer: Because the corn has ears!*



PRINT AND COLOR ME!



# Newsletter Articles Wanted

You can earn volunteer hours by writing about a garden you visited, a technique you tried which worked (or did not), or your enthusiasm for some special plant, or any interesting garden topic.

Keep contributing. Keep reading. Keep sharing. Please send your contributions to: [wcmgatheperennial@gmail.com](mailto:wcmgatheperennial@gmail.com).

Need to record your amazing volunteer hours?  
Click [HERE](#)



## Join Us on Facebook

If you haven't liked us on Facebook, you are missing the latest news! Find us [here](#).

# THE DIRT



## WCMGA BY THE NUMBERS

### Volunteer contributions so far in 2018

- Total project hours: 6,248
- Value of hours: \$138,469
- Total miles driven: 26,924
- Value of miles: \$12,385



## WCMGA Mission

The mission of the Williamson County Master Gardeners Association (WCMGA) is to provide research-based, horticultural education, while promoting environmental stewardship, via community volunteerism. WCMGA operates under the umbrella of UTIA and the UT/TSU Williamson County Extension Office.

## Contact Us

General Email: [wcmgatheperennial@gmail.com](mailto:wcmgatheperennial@gmail.com)

Address: [4215 Long Lane Suite 200, Franklin, TN 37064](#)