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August is For Summersweet, Monkey Flowers and Katydid



Summersweet- *Clethra alnifolia*



Clethra alnifolia, also called sweet pepperbush, is a native shrub found in wet areas like pond and stream banks or wetland areas. It has very fragrant white flower spikes that are attractive to many pollinators. Available in many garden centers and nurseries, there are also several pink- flowered varieties.



C. alnifolia 'Ruby Spice'

Clethra alnifolia



Monkey Flowers

Flowers arise at leaf axils and stems of the 1- 3 foot plants are square. Plants may reach 4 feet in height under certain conditions. The common name refers to the purple-blue flowers with a slash of yellow in the center which resemble the face of a monkey.

Monkey flower *Mimulus ringens* is a native wildflower found in moist to wet soils in sunny or partial shade locations. Often found along edges of bogs, ponds and streams, the interesting flowers resemble monkey faces. Flowers are visited by pollinators including the tiny syrphid fly shown in image on upper left

Monkey Flower

Katydids



Katydids start singing their night songs around the beginning of August. The scraping, rasping sound may be in synch with other katydids. katydids are large, chewing insects with large jumping legs. They are seldom pests as they travel from plant to plant chewing some leaves or occasionally flower parts. Above is a day old nymph of the *Scudderia* bush cricket.

Songs of Katydids



Above is a conehead katydid. Coneheads have a slanted face topped with a rounded or pointed cone

Conehead Katydids

Sunflowers



If you did not plant your sunflowers yet, you might think it is too late to sow the seeds now. Although ideally sown in July, in New England sunflowers can be started from seed now. After mid-August it is generally too late to get flowers because of the possibility of an early frost. So sow by mid August at the latest, or save the seeds for next year.



These images are of the same sunflower, which starts of yellow with an orange center and is burgundy when mature.

Growing Sunflowers

Pest Alert- Box Tree Moth



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is responding to a significant plant health threat and needs your help. Please check your boxwood plants for the invasive and destructive box tree moth. During the spring, a number of U.S. nurseries received potentially infested Canadian boxwood plants. This invasive pest feeds the plants' leaves and complete defoliation can occur, eventually killing the plant.

Many Connecticut residents have already purchased and planted these boxwoods. If you bought one, you may have infested boxwood on your property. USDA wants to prevent the box tree moth from spreading and establishing itself in the State and beyond. See link below for more information

Box Tree Moth

Insect Pest Highlight- Aphids and Tobacco Budworms



Check for aphid colonies on plants that appear to be wilting. Aphids can occur in large numbers on stems and leaves of plants, especially milkweeds, woodland sunflowers and daisies at this time of year. Stem feeding can cause upper parts of plants to wilt from interruption of sap flow if aphid populations are high. Aphids can be crushed by hand or sprayed with insecticidal soap, if necessary. Ladybeetle larvae and other predators of aphids may also be killed by either method. Rinsing off aphids with a jet of water can also be used, but they may crawl back on the plant.

Integrated Pest Management for Aphids

Tobacco budworm moth caterpillars feed on flowers and flower buds of plants especially in the tobacco family. Check petunias, nicotiana, geranium and red snapdragons for chewed petals and flower parts when there is a lack of flowering. Look inside flowers as well. Control must include hand-picking and careful use of any control products as bees and other pollinators will be visiting flowers.



Tobacco Budworms

Resources for Vegetable Gardeners



Harvesting and storing vegetables

When to Start Planting Vegetable Garden Crops

UConn Vegetable Pest Alert July 30 2021

Disease Highlight- Late Blight on Tomato



University of Maryland describes late blight as a disease caused by the same pathogen, *Phytophthora infestans*, that was responsible for the Irish potato famine of the 1840s. Potato and tomato plants can be killed and the pathogen can overwinter in infected plant tissue left in or on the ground. Infected weeds like nightshade near the garden should be removed.

Late Blight

Plant Highlight- Groundnut



This native vine is a member of the legumes, and has an edible tuber. Often seen climbing over plants in fields and meadows, it is usually noticed because of its distinctive pink or purplish flowers that bloom from late July- September. Bees and flies visit the distinctive-smelling flowers.

Groundnut

Insect Highlight- Hummingbird Clearwing Moth



Hummingbird clearwing moths are a familiar visitor to flower gardens. This native sphinx moth and the similar snowberry clearwing moth hover like hummingbirds as they sip nectar from flowers with their long proboscis. Caterpillars usually feed on viburnums and honeysuckles.

Hummingbird Clearwing

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Gardening Tips for August

August is the month to order peony roots for September planting. Peonies should be in the ground about a month before the average first frost date.

Colorful plastic golf tees can be stuck in the ground to mark the location of dormant plants such as spring flowering bulbs or perennials.

Water plants deeply once or twice a week depending on the heat and humidity and wind

Check the water needs of hanging baskets once or twice daily. Wind and sun dry them out quicker than other containers, and plants are larger now so any rains may not be getting through the plant canopy enough to moisten the soil

Fertilize container plantings and hanging baskets if they look yellow with a ½ strength dose of a balanced liquid fertilizer.

Continue to deadhead annuals and perennials to encourage continuous bloom.

Scout for C-shaped notches on the edges of the leaves of your perennials such as dahlias, roses, basil or coleus that are caused by Asiatic beetle feeding.

Fertilize perennials with a 5-10-5 or 5-10-10 product to encourage continued blooming.

Lawns can be seeded/ renovated from August 15- September 15 for best results. Spring seeding is not as effective as it is in late summer

Do not prune boxwoods or roses as new flushes of growth late in the season may suffer from winter damage.

[For a more extensive list of tips visit Gardening tips for August](#)



Have Your Soil Tested for Macro- & Micro Nutrients

Send your soil sample in for testing now. For details on submitting a sample, go to [UConn Soil and Nutrient Laboratory](#).

Photo by dmp, UConn

[UConn Soil Nutrient Analysis Laboratory](#)

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Things to do/events



[Connecticut Trail Finder](#)- Connecticut Trail Finder is a new resource for those looking to explore the Nutmeg State's 2,000 miles of trails.

[Bartlett Arboretum and Gardens](#)- The Bartlett in Stamford offers events, gardens to visit and other activities.

[Fort Trumbull State Park](#)- The first Fort Trumbull was built to protect the New London Harbor from British attack. Get an interactive history lesson at the visitor's center, or just walk the Fort and ramparts for a view of the Thames River, a visit to Fort Trumbull has something for everyone including a boardwalk and fishing pier.

[Connecticut River Museum](#)- Visit annual exhibits like the Christmas holiday train layout and permanent exhibits like the first American submarine dubbed "the turtle".

[Yale Marsh Botanical Garden](#)- Visitors who are not from Yale are welcome to visit for self-guided walking tours of this extensive collection of plants including naturalistic beds and wildflower plantings

[Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge](#)- ten units across 70 miles of the Ct. coastline provide opportunities for viewing birds, wildlife and several historic buildings including the Falkner Island lighthouse

[James L. Goodwin State Forest](#)- trail maps are available on-line. Contact them for any upcoming guided tours and other events

[Connecticut College Arboretum](#)- there are several trails, including a native plant collection featuring spring wildflowers and the Nancy Moss Native Azalea Collection

Spotted Lanternfly



The spotted lanternfly is an invasive sap-feeding planthopper that was discovered in Berks County, Pennsylvania in 2014. It is native to China, India, and Vietnam. It attacks many hosts and has the potential to severely impact Connecticut's farm crops, particularly apples, grapes, and hops, as well as a number of tree species like maple. In the fall, adults can often be found congregating on tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus*), willows and other trees. They will lay egg masses on trees and almost any nearby surface. The public is urged to report potential sightings of this invasive pest to ReportSLF@ct.gov. Submission of a photograph with any report is encouraged.



[Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group \(CIPWG\)](#)

Invasive Mobile Apps: Download these Invasive/Early Detection/ Reporting Apps on your mobile device!

[Invasive Mobile Apps](#)

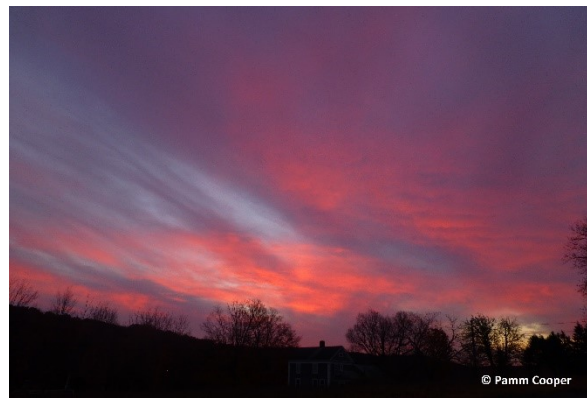
Food for thought

The University of Nebraska has some interesting facts on corn, wheat, soybeans and sorghum. Different kinds of corn, for example, are grown for different uses.

[Crop & Plant Science Facts](#)

Weather

Weather Folklore – Facts or Fiction? Weather fun facts from Cornell University
When dew is on the grass, rain will never come to pass.



[Weather Folklore- Fact or Fiction?](#)

Who knew?

Does nature impact our wellbeing? The University of Minnesota has done research on the impacts on our mental and physical wellbeing when we are actively engaged in the natural world.

[Nature and its Effects on Human Wellbeing](#)



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