

Gardener's Corner June 2024

It's June and I don't know how I missed telling you all about this, but, in November, our plant hardiness zone changed. Previously we were Zone 6b, and now are in 7a. So, what does this mean for our gardens? Since the plant hardiness zone is based on the average annual extreme minimum winter temperature and tells us what perennials are likely to flourish in a particular location, it may expand the types of plants that can reliably sustain our winter weather. You can find more information about the subject at <https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/>. A review on how to use the hardiness zone maps is here: <https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/pages/how-to-use-the-maps>

The **Missouri Botanical Garden** tips and tasks for the month remind us to watch for bagworms feeding, especially on junipers and arborvitae. If you find them, collect and dispose of them before they do damage. Remember to prune your spring blooming trees and shrubs before the end of June to encourage blooming next year. And while you have your pruning shears out, remember to deadhead bulbs and spring flowering perennials as their blossoms fade. Finally, watch for powdery mildew. With as much rain as we have had, it may be a particular problem this year. The **University of Minnesota Extension** has a good article entitled, *Powdery mildew in the flower garden* which you can find here: <https://extension.umn.edu/plant-diseases/powdery-mildew-flower-garden>

Mosquitos are also becoming a problem because of all the rain. An article from **Garden Design** discusses *12 mosquito repellent plants* that may help you sit out on the deck or patio more comfortably: https://www.gardendesign.com/plants/mosquito-repellent.html?utm_source=article-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Mosquito-Repellent-Plants-5-23-24. Note that many of these plants are herbs.

Speaking of herbs, an interesting article was recently published by the **University of Missouri Extension**. Cleverly entitled *In Thymes of old, Rosemary used lavender to freshen the air*, you can find it at: <https://extension.missouri.edu/news/in-thymes-of-old-rosemary-used-lavender-to-freshen-the-air>. Additional information on how to grow herbs can be found at the MU Extension: <https://extension.missouri.edu/publications/g6470>

Another use for herbs is to add them to bouquets so that not only do you have the beauty and scents of the flowers, but aromas of the herbs. I found an article from the **University of Illinois Extension** entitled *Add a dash of herbs to spice up floral bouquets* that tells how to do this. You can find it here: <https://extension.illinois.edu/news-releases/add-dash-herbs-spice-floral-bouquets>

To make the most of the herbs you grow, try drying them for use all winter long. **The Spruce** has an article on *How to dry and store fresh garden herbs*: <https://www.thespruce.com/how-to-dry-and-store-herbs-1403397> If you scroll down, at the bottom of the article, there are several articles on growing and harvesting specific herbs that may be of interest to you.

Finally, **The Smithsonian Let's Talk Gardens** series is on hiatus for the summer. If you are interested in viewing some of the webinars in their previous series, you can find the video library here: <https://gardens.si.edu/learn/lets-talk-gardens-video-library/>

