

The *Reynolda Gardens*
of Wake Forest University

Gardener's

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JOURNAL



DOVEY, THE RESCUED COCKER SPANIEL, IS ONE OF MANY REASONS TO MAKE SURE MY YARD AND GARDEN ARE SAFE.

Garden Safety for Dogs

by Preston Stockton, RGWFU manager

People who know me know that as much as I love plants, I love my dogs even more. Yes, it is true! As a dog owner, I know that I have certain responsibilities to make sure they are safe in my yard and garden.

Pesticides

Let me start by saying that we have all heard the debates about lawn care companies and whether the chemicals they use are safe for children and pets. The owner of the company we use at Reynolda Gardens once said to me that they would not be in business very long if they made pets and children sick. Excellent point! I know what chemicals this company uses on the lawns at Reynolda. They are the safest available and are biodegradable. Any company that is not forthcoming on what they are apply-

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A Little of Reynolda for Your Home: Korean Spice Viburnum

by Diane Wise, RGWFU head horticulturist

As I write this, spring is just around the corner. Here at Reynolda Gardens, nothing reminds me more of that longed for season than the *Viburnum carlesii* next to the steps in the Pink and White Garden. You all know what a sucker I am for fragrance, and this shrub with its sweet, white flowers is one of my favorites; but so are most of the viburnums. If you are not familiar with these plants, members of the Caprifoliaceae family, which also includes the honeysuckles, now is the time to get acquainted.

Viburnums are comprised of roughly 150 species of deciduous and evergreen shrubs and trees, ranging from three to thirty feet in height. Native to the temperate Northern Hemisphere, some species also extend into southeast Asia and South America. The viburnum has many attributes, including ornamental foliage; fall color; fruit that ranges from yellow, to red, to black; and flowers, usually pink to white, that are often fragrant—notice that I said often, not always, as some can be downright stinky. In general, the viburnum is a wildlife magnet. Not only does it provide a safe place to nest, but the leaves serve as an important food source for some butterflies, and the aforementioned fruit, called a drupe, is attractive to birds. In herbal medicine, *V. lantana*, wayfaring tree, is used to treat allergies and asthma, and *V. opulus*, crampbark, is used as a powerful antispasmodic.

Viburnums are very easy to use; they are well-suited to a shrub border and for planting between other shrubs and trees. Once I saw a hedge of fragrant viburnums in full bloom—I thought I had died and gone to heaven. If

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Garden Safety for Dogs

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ing should make you nervous. Talk to your company and make it clear that you have pets, and that they are out in the yard and on the turf. If you have concerns about the chemicals they are using, ask to see the Material Safety Data Sheet for that chemical. A lawn company is required to have it on the truck. There you will find information on the chemical and its safety risks. Be sure that your dogs are not outside during chemical applications and keep them off the lawn until it is dry. Don't forget to check the gates. How many times have companies forgotten and left the gate open for Buff, and off she goes?

Actually, homeowners are more dangerous than professional companies. Just because a product is packaged for home use does not make it safe, especially if it is not properly applied. Please read and follow the label. I am always looking for new products to use for certain pests that are safer alternatives here at Reynolda and at home.

Another chemical concern in the garden is the use of slug and snail baits, which use apple meal or some other sweet smelling base with the active ingredient. Any bait with metaldehyde is dangerous to dogs and cats. If bait is necessary in your war on slugs, use one with iron phosphate, such as Escar-Go! or Sluggo. I know of people who also use beer or coffee to kill slugs. I would keep your pets away from these, also.

Poisonous Plants

Another concern in the garden is dangerous plants. Last summer a friend of mine was admiring the castor bean plant we had in the front beds. She commented that she would love to grow it in her garden. I know that her Yorkie, Henry, is notorious for eating plants and that the castor bean plant, especially the seed, is very poisonous. This plant is a big NO for gardens with dogs, cats, or small children. As much as I love it, we never sell it at our plant sales for this reason.

There is a long list of poisonous plants on the ASPCA website, covering those that are poisonous to dogs as well as cats and horses. It is never a bad idea to check this list before purchasing plants. Of course, my perfect pooches would not dare eat my expensive plants! Know your dog and use reasonable precautions.

The following are common plants poisonous to dogs:

Tulip and narcissus bulbs	<i>Tulipa/Narcissus</i> sp.
Azalea and rhododendron	<i>Rhododendron</i> sp.
Cyclamen	<i>Cyclamen</i> sp.
Kalanchoe	<i>Kalanchoe</i> sp.
Yew	<i>Taxus</i> sp.
Amaryllis	<i>Amaryllis</i> sp.
Autumn crocus	<i>Colchicum autumnale</i>
Chrysanthemum	<i>Chrysanthemum</i> sp.
English ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Peace lily	<i>Spathiphyllum</i> sp.
Pothos	<i>Epipremnum</i> sp.
Schefflera	<i>Schefflera</i> sp.

(By the way, members of the lily family are highly toxic to cats and can cause severe kidney damage. We love our cats, too!)

The ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center, an allied agency of the University of Illinois, is a great resource if you think your pet has ingested a toxic chemical or poisonous plant. Their number is 888-426-4435. They are available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. There is usually a charge for consultation.

It takes just a little planning and a few precautions to keep the furry members of our family safe and out of the emergency clinic. 🐾



IF INGESTED, SOME OF OUR FAVORITE HOUSEPLANTS, SHOWN HERE IN THE REYNOLDA GARDENS PLANT SHOP, MAY PROVE HARMFUL TO PETS.

Garden Safety for Humans

by John Kiger, RGWFU assistant manager

The staff of Reynolda Gardens has various types of equipment at our disposal to assist us in our daily duties. They range from the very simple, such as rakes, hand pruners, hand saws, shovels, and mowers, to our two thousand pound Kubota tractor. We operate each of these, no matter how simple, with safety in mind, not only for ourselves but for the public as well. In this article I would like to touch on areas where you can help us help you remain safe and enjoy your visit.

Motorized Equipment

It is estimated that eighty thousand people in the United States are injured by mowers every year. These injuries are caused by careless operation or by stones or sticks being projected from under the deck. At full throttle, the tips of mower blades can reach speeds of 200 plus miles per hour. Of course, we do our best to minimize any objects that may be thrown, but there are those you just cannot see. This is where our visitors can help us help them. When you see a mower in operation, please keep yourself and children at a safe distance. Some mower manufacturers suggest fifty feet, but, just to be on the safe side, let's go with seventy-five feet.

On a larger scale, let me mention our Kubota tractor and bush hog. You may notice as you visit Reynolda Gardens that we are in the middle of eradicating areas of English ivy that seem to be taking over. Our preferred method is to mow it as closely as possible in the winter and then, as new growth emerges in the spring, to spray it with an herbicide, such as Round-up. The critical part is the mowing. In most areas the ivy is extremely thick and stands five to eight inches tall. Any objects are certainly buried, and, if the bush hog catches them just right, it can send debris flying for seventy-five feet or more. If you notice this piece of equipment in operation, keep a distance of one hundred feet or more. In some situations, it may be wise to turn around and go the other way.

OPERATING EQUIPMENT SAFELY REQUIRES CONCENTRATION. PLEASE KEEP YOURSELF—AND YOUR CHILDREN—AT A SAFE DISTANCE. KIRK DEAL, LEFT, AND JIMMY HUGHES AT WORK NEAR REYNOLDA ROAD.

Gardeners at Work!

Now let's visit the rose garden. Here, there is a totally different safety concern. Beginning in mid-spring, if you are an early morning visitor to Reynolda Gardens, you are likely to see Preston Stockton or me spraying the roses. We are not at all hard to spot. We will be pulling a seven gallon electric sprayer and wearing a white, coverall Tyvek suit, neoprene gloves, and a half-face respirator. On several occasions Preston and I have each been approached by a visitor, who only wants to ask a question. Most of the time we are not aware they are there until we feel a tap on the shoulder. The outfit or protection we wear is mandated by the label on the products we are applying on a weekly basis, which generally consist of a fungicide and insecticide. By law, the label for product application must be followed. Visitors are in no danger from short exposure, but, since we spray often, we must be fully protected while spraying. We cannot stop and remove the face mask to answer their questions.

As you visit, keep in mind that we are hard at work. Speaking for myself, when I am involved in a certain task, my thoughts are fully dedicated to the matter at hand. This does not mean that I do not notice what's around me, but I rely on visitors to watch out for potential safety hazards. There are those, especially children, who are intrigued by either what we are doing or the piece of equipment we are using and want to walk up and see. It's especially important for adults to keep a close watch on children throughout Reynolda Gardens, since children are often unaware of dangers, especially those associated with equipment.

Our goal at Reynolda Gardens is to provide a beautiful place for visitors to come and relax and, above all, be safe. As I said, help us help you make your visit safe and enjoyable. 🌻



The Engineers of Reynolda, Part 3: Louis L. Miller

by Camilla Wilcox, RGWFU curator of education

Over the past two issues, I have shared the results of research into the life and work of Horatio Buckenham, the senior partner of the firm Buckenham and Miller, which was responsible for the initial design of Reynolda estate. An advertisement in *Country Life in America*, 1911 describes the firm's abilities and services: "Large and Small Estates Designed, Parks, Cemeteries, and Land Developments. Trees and Shrubs Supplied." Each man worked prolifically before and after their partnership, and their influence reached far and wide—from the city parks of Louisville, Kentucky, to Hanes Park in Winston-Salem; from Smith College in South Hadley, Massachusetts, to East Carolina Teachers Training School (now East Carolina University) in Greenville, North Carolina; from Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, to the local Methodist Children's Home; and from estates in the northeast, to Reynolda.

Many elements of the Reynolda landscape have pastoral, graceful qualities that were introduced to American landscape design by Frederick Law Olmsted in the nineteenth century. This was not a coincidence; each man was associated with the Olmsted firms at some time in his career. In 1902 twenty-seven year old Louis Miller is on record as having worked on plans for one estate in Ridgefield, Connecticut, and two others in Manchester, Massachusetts. By then, Mr. Buckenham, at age forty-eight, was no longer working with the Olmsteds. He would go to Somerville, New Jersey, in 1903, subsequent to the departure of James Greenleaf, another Olmsted associate, to continue the development of Duke Farms. In 1906 Mr. Miller followed. The two continued to work for Mr. Duke, but they were also involved in other projects, the scope of which is not known. Some materials indicate that their office was in New York City; others show an additional office in Somerville. In March 1908, the same month the business was incorporated in New York City, the firm was retained to "lay out the grounds" for the East Carolina campus.

In 1909 the firm began design work at the Children's Home campus in Winston and in 1910 began a series of plans and drawings that would come to define Reynolda: the lake, the dam, and the overall conceptual plan. Although it is not clear whether one or both of the partners contributed to the early designs, by 1912, correspondence,



THIS VIEW OF THE FORMER GOLF LINKS IS CHARACTERISTIC OF OLMSTED LANDSCAPES, WITH EXPANSIVE OPEN SPACE FRAMED BY PICTURESQUE WOODLANDS.

including some related to the Reynolds' Fifth Street home, bore Mr. Miller's name only.

In September of 1912 Buckenham and Miller produced the initial design for the West Highlands subdivision and, likely, their last design as partners. Although an advertisement appears for the Louis Miller Company in the October 1912 issue of *Country Life in America*, the partnership was not formally dissolved until December. The same office locations were given as before, but the services offered were not exactly the same: "All Branches of Landscape Work Designed in Detail, from Small Lots to Large Parks and Land Developments." In September 1913 Mr. Miller drew his last plans for Mrs. Reynolds, for formal gardens near the greenhouse.

Although he no longer worked for the Reynolds family after 1914, Mr. Miller's work in the local community was far from over. His versatile skills, his experience, and his vision helped transform the appearance of the city. In 1919, after serving with the Army Corps of Engineers during World War I, he designed Hanes Park, which contains many of the elements that were characteristic of Duke Farms. In collaboration with local civil engineer J. E. Ellerbe, he brought a level of sophistication and taste known only in the wealthiest cities to planning the West Highlands subdivision in 1923 and 1928. His continuing interest in his Winston-Salem projects is evidenced by his return to complete development plans for the Children's Home in 1924 and Hanes Park in 1931.

By then, Mr. Miller had made his home in Somerville, where he continued his practice. He died on January 26, 1956, leaving his estate to a local hospital. 🌱

See the *Gardener's Journal* online for:

🌱 A discussion of the formal garden plan by Louis Miller, Summer 2005

🌱 The early designs for the estate, highlighting Mr. Buckenham, Spring 2010

🌱 Mr. Buckenham's personal life, Fall 2010

Historical references are available on request.

A Little of Reynolda for Your Home: Korean Spice Viburnum

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you'd like to add one to your garden, probably the best place to start is with *V. carlesii*.

V. carlesii (kar-lee'-see-eye), Korean spice viburnum, was introduced in 1912 by W. R. Carles, who collected the plant from its native habitat in Korea. It grows slowly in sun to part shade, tolerates wind and drought, and has no serious disease or insect problems. It is a deciduous shrub that will ultimately reach six to eight feet in height, with a spread of four to eight feet, rounded and dense, with stiff, upright, spreading branches. The opposite, matte green leaves are irregularly toothed and pubescent on the upper surface. In late April to early May, just as the leaves are emerging, it bears dense, two to three inch clusters, or cymes, of pink buds, which open into fragrant white flowers. For me, there aren't enough words to describe the fragrance. It is simply delicious, similar to *Daphne odora*, and will usually last about ten days, when the flowers fade. It should be lightly pruned after flowering. The older stems are gray, rather than brown, and exhibit a characteristic fissuring. The drupes are borne upward in August to September and are red, changing to black as they age. The leaves turn from green to red to wine in the



IN THOMAS SEARS' PLAN FOR THE PINK AND WHITE GARDEN, *V. CARLESII* WAS PLACED ON EACH SIDE OF THE STEPS. PHOTOGRAPH BY MR. SEARS, 1920S.

autumn. Do remember that *V. carlesii* does not like to have its roots disturbed, so once planted, leave it be. There are a number of cultivars that are very attractive, and I have described each below.

Compactum

More compact than the species, only reaching three feet in height and width, so it can be used in a smaller space. It has leaves that are much darker than the species; pink buds opening to white flowers, two to three inches across; and a fragrance of cloves. It may be slightly difficult to find.

Aurora

Developed in Newcastle, Ireland, it has received the Royal Horticulture Society Award of Garden Merit. It has intensely red buds that open to pink flowers, which then turn white and are very fragrant. The leaves are copper flushed.

Cayuga

Distinct in producing pink buds and fully opened white flowers on the same cyme, so that the pink accents the white, waxy flowers nicely. Its leaves are much darker than the species. It matures at eight feet by eight feet, often branching close to the ground. It can grow as far north as Ithaca, New York, and as far south as Athens, Georgia. 🌱



THE SCENT OF *V. CARLESII* BLOOMS FILLS THE PINK AND WHITE GARDEN IN LATE APRIL AND EARLY MAY.

Ornamental Edibles

by David Bare, RGWFU greenhouse manager

The days when the vegetable garden was located in the farthest reach of the backyard seem to be yielding to a new appreciation of the ornamental properties of edibles. Veggie gardens are all the rage now, and long gone are the days when the vegetable garden was treated like the tool shed.

In the Cottage Gardens at Reynolda, we try to maintain a constant rotation in an effort to keep the gardens growing through the seasons. This can sometimes be a challenge. These beds were designed to provide an example of how the front yard might look if the lawn were replaced with productive garden space, and it is important that they look good. It was surprising to me to find so many colorful edible plants that are worthy of this task. We supplement with flowers, and a few of these are edible, too.

We use a couple of basic design tricks to further the ornamental value of these gardens. We are fortunate to have John Kiger, with his fine carpentry skills, on staff. He built our trellises, which serve as a visual wall to define the parameters of the back of the garden. In the front, we have used containers to the same effect. The trellises are planted with vining plants, like tomatoes, peas, cucumbers, and beans, and we usually plant the containers with standard-form hibiscus. Planting the vines on trellises also provides the obvious space-saving advantage, and it is better culture as well, providing good air circulation and reducing the incidence of fungal disease.

We also try to plant the garden much like one would plant a bedding scheme. Except in cases where it makes cultivation difficult, we never plant in rows. Instead we triangulate and plant in mixed masses. There is more than an aesthetic value here as well. The more diverse a planting is, the less likely it will be discovered by insect pests. It sort of “throws off their radar,” if you will.

Attention is also paid to the forms of plants. We try to contrast shapes and textures. This means using broad-leaved plants like mustard, lettuce, and Swiss chard in combination with fine leaves, like bulbing fennel and carrots. We use onions, shallots, and scallions as grassy-leaved counterparts to an underplanting of spinach or beans. But more than form or texture, it is color that makes these plants a pleasure to work with.

The following are a few recommendations of annual edibles that are decorative enough to fit into any garden scheme.

🌿 Fish Pepper

A hot pepper with every aspect variegated. The medium size plants have a horizontal branching habit and leaves striped and blotched white and green. Even the fruit of this plant is variegated, starting off striped green and cream before turning red. This is an heirloom African-American pepper from the Chesapeake Bay region. Traditionally it was used to flavor soups and stews. A little goes a long way, but this plant has such fine character you will want to grow it for its aesthetic appeal alone.

🌿 Skyphos Butterhead Lettuce

This was a new introduction from Johnny's Selected Seeds in 2010. It proved to be a very hardy and absolutely gorgeous lettuce, lasting well into the depth of fall and some very cold weather. It formed a compact, rounded head, with outer leaves that are a deep wine red that fades into a folded interior of creamy green and chartreuse. The seed was expensive but worth it.

🌿 Pistou Basil

A ball of basil, this little plant reminds me more of a little boxwood than anything else, and that is how we use it. Typically we will outline beds with it, where it will accentuate their form, and we plant taller plants in the center. It is also a great addition to the plate. It has good basil flavor and makes an especially nice garnish. The leaves can be pinched off and used whole.

Few vegetable plants are not ornamental if we rethink how we use them. And with the wide diversity of color and form available today, there is no reason the vegetable garden can't be as pretty as the flower bed. 🌿



THE COTTAGE GARDENS ARE DESIGNED AS A MODEL OF A FRONT YARD GARDEN.

Floating Aquatic Plants

by Michelle Hawks, RGWFU horticulturist

Nothing is more restful and lovely than a pond in the garden. Fish, beautiful greenery, and perhaps a waterfall create a relaxing, stress-free oasis. Adding aquatic plants to a pond is a good investment in healthy water and enhances the overall beauty of the pond. Many people enjoy the serenity of aquatic plants floating on a pond.

Floating aquatics have developed special features that allow them to live in the water. Their leaves are broad and flat, which aids in flotation. Their small, feathery roots take in oxygen, and they obtain all of their nutrients directly from the water. They grow quickly and require periodic thinning, but, by shading the water with their leaves, they reduce the amount of light available for algae to grow.

Floating plants are some of the hardest water garden plants to choose because there are so many different types, including both flowering and non-flowering varieties.

People often ask me what kind and how many plants should be placed in the pond. My answer is always, put what you want. But if you are just getting started on a small pond, or maybe even huge containers, start out with floaters. The ones I have used at Reynolda Gardens are water lettuce, water hyacinth, and mosaic plant.

Water Lettuce

Thick, fleshy, light green, ribbed leaves form a rosette that looks like a small head of lettuce. Individual rosettes can range from two to eighteen inches across, depending on variety. The leaves are covered in tiny hairs that repel water; it is one of the few fuzzy water plants. It is a vigorous grower and can form large mats that choke out other plants. It is grown for its foliage, but it does bloom. The insignificant flowers are usually hidden down between the leaves. It is not invasive in this area.

Water Hyacinth

This shiny, oddly shaped, bulbous, bright green plant spreads by throwing off plantlets all around its stem. It is very decorative, and the groups of plants will sail gently around the pond surface. In the spring and summer, the

water hyacinth will produce soft lavender flowers, painted with blue and yellow splashed interiors. It grows best in full sun. The dense roots make great shelter for young fish and other wildlife. It is highly invasive and should not be used in a natural pond in our area.

Mosaic Plant

This unique plant is a favorite at Reynolda Gardens, and, by far, my own favorite. Its leaves, which are green with red edges and stems, grow from a central radius so that the foliage forms a mosaic-like circle. Its running spread can cover twenty-four inches, and each rosette will spread to four inches. It quickly provides water coverage in warm, sunny to partly shady areas in your pond. During the summer, small, single, yellow flowers will bloom. Most people recommend anchoring the roots in soil, but, in my experience, it does better as a floater. Because of the rapid growth and intricate pattern of the leaves, it softens the edges of the water garden like lace on a dress, with the added benefit of helping the pond reach and keep its ecological balance. It is not invasive in this area.

So now it's time to look through catalogs and visit garden centers for your aquatic plants. Once you decide what you want, think of all the serenity you will experience this spring and summer, while watching your floaters—and your stress—drift on by. 🌿



THE MOSAIC PLANT IS A PERFECT ACCOMPANIMENT TO LILIES AND OTHER WATER PLANTS.

Volunteers 2009-2010

Volunteers lead programs and assist with gardening activities and sales.

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