

Can You Dig It?

By Schann Nelson  
Columbia County Master Gardener



Dragging myself inside to write on one of the long awaited nice days that finally arrived. Muugghhhh! Any day that you can simply bask in the glory of true Oregon summer can only be good. Hard to bask however when there's so much to do. But I've managed quite well (at basking) recently, in spite of the weather, work responsibility and car breakdowns. In spite of me, Penrhynn has thrown herself into the garden and we've got quite a garden yard.

We got a nice crop of early peas. The other end of the bed devoted to peas was planted twice. First, a pole variety which I attempted to trellis up a piece of fence. Much of this initial planting didn't come up, including none of the parsley in this same bed. I reseeded with another bush pea. Too many varieties to manage! Now we have shading of the pod peas underneath them, and I'm not sure how we'll harvest!

The bush pea end of the bed has been replanted along with our latest discovery...Cat Control Device. An ample 6-8 inch cut off the end of a roll of green 'fencing' wire, formed into an arch, will keep the cat out of a row of freshly planted basil. I'm sure many of you have been wondering how long it would take me to figure this out. I plan on making several more of these simple wire structures, a couple of years worth anyway.

The single pack of onion seedlings continues to produce delicious onions over a period of time. Once they have dried out even a little bit you can pour water on them and watch them get bigger. Since they are planted all around the edge of the bed, some are a lot more securely planted than others. But it appears that as long as they can hang in there, once they develop a root system and can consume large quantities of water they will swell visibly with the application of

water. This bed is mostly empty where we have taken out broccoli, which I think has helped insure the impeccable drainage the onions require. We've transplanted a few cucumbers into this bed and are trellising them up the center now.

Two varieties of pole bean have finally figured out what the pole is for and survived attacks of slugs, flea beetles (not too bad because they are mostly in the potatoes), weeds and vermin. Even in my shady garden, it's incredible not to have beans by this time of year. It certainly seems that we've had at least one meal of green beans by this time of year.

At the same time, it is impossible to even begin to keep up with pulling out enough weeds, before they go to seed, to even see the garden or the perennial beds. As my sister so kindly put it "lovely, overgrown cottage garden", referring to what is supposed to be a perennial border behind the blue berries, but has again become a monster overgrowth of one or two very tall plants. This year it's phlox, but in the past it's been aggressive store-bought flowers or an especially aggressive decorative heliocrysum [dark red stems]. This is not helping the poor blueberries. They edge one side of this plot, the sunny side and are,(of course) the most desired species in this bed. Not a berry to be seen yet. Must have bloomed at the wrong time.

I'm afraid to go out and look at the tomatoes. Drastic pruning is coming up soon but there sure don't even seem to be many blooms. We have managed a handful of Sun Gold's but nothing else even looks promising. I'm hoping that when I actually get in there I'll be more encouraged. Oddly enough, both the tomatoes and the chickens could use a good dose of calcium. Weird coincidence of the day. We don't have any yet but the black rotten spots on the bottoms of tomatoes are from a lack of calcium. In the long run the calcium problem in the soil can be corrected by correcting the pH. The chickens lay eggs

with weak or no shells until they get some oyster shell. I read that some chickens get most of the calcium they need from consuming snail shells. What a great garden benefit and no wonder I hardly ever see a snail.

Speaking of livestock getting rid of the unwanted guest, I sure miss having a cow. Though I know since reading Chip Bubl's article last month about plant toxicity, we never had a problem, most likely because we are so small and she had a comparatively large area to graze, wasn't overly tempted by the occasional toxic weed thrown over the fence, and loved many of them. Now we have big collections of old broccoli, clover, foxglove and buttercups that we can only put in the compost area and let the remaining chickens turn, turn, turn.

I have successfully shaded an area of lawn that used to be impossibly hot in August and September. I didn't prune the Artic Kiwi last winter and it completely shades the bed underneath it and the lawn in the late afternoon. Creating these microclimate spaces that we, and the plants we love, can enjoy, is what it's all about. A cool drink, a shady seat, a gentle fragrant breeze – heaven in one small pocket of earth.

Marine Board plans to use new technology to reduce costs

The Marine Board is facing the fiscal realities impacting all of state government and is striving to improve services by finding efficiencies without increasing registration fees for Oregon's boaters. The silver lining in this economy is the ever-evolving use of the internet, which is opening more doors to rapidly communicate information, for little cost. As part of the Marine Board's effort to return more boating dollars back to boaters in the form of services, the agency is experimenting with moving away from traditional printing, beginning with the annual Underway Newsletter, and offering the publication digitally.

"Underway" is generally produced once a year and mailed directly to currently registered motorboat owners. The Marine Board produces this publication in partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard, sharing costs. The Marine Board creates the layout and pays for printing, and the Coast Guard pays for mailing. "The cost of paper, ink, print services and mailing continue to rise, so the decision to go digital makes fiscal sense," says Scott Brewen, Director of the Marine Board. "This is a chance to save money while trying something new. We will see what kind of feedback we receive from the boaters." The digital Underway Newsletter

also contains hyperlinks to specific program information and drafts of the Marine Board's Strategic Plan, Boating Facilities Six-Year Plan.

The Marine Board is also transitioning over the next two years away from print publications for boating safety, posting much of the same content online. "Boaters can download the specific information they need, and not waste paper and ink," Brewen adds.

Looking toward the future, the Marine Board is also building a more robust, interactive database where boaters will be able to find boat launches, learn about boating hazards, where to find clear gasoline, the closest pumpout/dump station, and other important information. "The end goal is to develop this interactive online system into a mobile app so boaters will have all the information they need to stay safe out on the water, at their fingertips," says Brewen. Brewen hopes the new system will be online within the next year.

Marine Board brochures and larger boating guides can be viewed and downloaded from <http://www.boatoregon.com/OSMB/library/library.shtml>

To download a copy of the annual "Underway" newsletter, go to <http://www.boatoregon.com/OSMB/library/docs/Underway2011Web.pdf>.

Church Directory

<b>VERNONIA FOURSQUARE CHURCH</b>  Carl Pense, Pastor 850 Madison Avenue, Vernonia 503 429-1103 Sunday Worship Service: 10:30 a.m. Children's Sunday School	<b>FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH</b>  Pastor John D. Murray 359 "A" Street, Vernonia 503 860-3860 Sunday School 9:45 a.m. Sunday Worship Service 11:00 a.m. Wednesday Prayer Meeting 7:00 p.m.	<b>PIONEER BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP</b>  John Cahill, Pastor 939 Bridge Street, Vernonia 503-429-1161 www.pbfaive.com Sunday School 9:45 a.m. Sunday Morning Worship 11:00 a.m. Thursday Prayer 7:00 p.m.
<b>SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST</b>  Larry Gibson, Pastor 2nd Ave. and Nehalem St., Vernonia 503 429-8301 Morning Worship, 11:00 a.m. Sabbath School 9:30 a.m.	<b>VERNONIA COMMUNITY CHURCH</b>  Ralph Young, Pastor 957 State Avenue, Vernonia 503 429-6790 Sunday Bible Classes 9:00 a.m. Family Praise & Worship 10:30 a.m. Wednesday Prayer 6:30 p.m. Thursday Ladies Study 7:00 p.m. Nursery 10:15 a.m. Vernonia Community Preschool	<b>NEHALEM VALLEY BIBLE CHURCH</b>  Gary Taylor, Pastor Grant & North Streets, Vernonia 503 429-5378 Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship 11:00 a.m. Nursery available Wednesday Service 7:00 p.m.
<b>ASSEMBLY OF GOD</b>  Wayne and Maureen Marr 662 Jefferson Ave., Vernonia, 503 429-0373 Sunday School 9:45 a.m. Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.	<b>VERNONIA CHRISTIAN CHURCH</b>  Sam Hough, Minister 410 North Street, Vernonia 503 429-6522 Sunday School 9:45 a.m. Sunday Worship 11:00 a.m. (meets in Youth & Family Center) Various Home Group Meetings	<b>CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS</b>  Marc Farmer, Branch President 1350 E. Knott Street, Vernonia 503 429-7151 Sacrament Meeting, Sunday 10 a.m. Sunday School & Primary 11:20 a.m. Relief Society, Priesthood and Young Women, Sunday 12:10 p.m.
<b>ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH</b>  Rev. Luan Tran, Administrator 960 Missouri Avenue, Vernonia 503 429-8841 Mass Sunday 12:00 Noon Religious Educ. Sunday 10:30 a.m.		