

Master Gardener Extension Volunteers of Union and Towns Counties



Newsletter

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Our Officers:

President

Marty Dellinger

Vice President

Vicki Best

Recording Secretary

Jared Ogden

Corresponding Secretary

David Best

Treasurer

Linda Jones

Meetings: Master Gardener Extension Volunteers of Union and Towns Counties meet on the second Thursday of every month in the Fellowship Hall at Sharp Memorial Methodist Church in Young Harris, 4:00 p.m. socializing, 4:30 p.m. meeting. We do not meet if inclement weather closes Union County or Towns County schools.

Spring

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Reminders

March 14, 2019 - Program TBA

April 11, 2019 - Program TBA

May 9, 2019 - Program TBA



Anticipation

Look closely in the mulch and you can see the tiny green shoots that the bulbs are sending up. This is *Iris cristata*, Dwarf Crested Iris and very early each spring/late winter, I anticipate and look forward to this harbinger of spring.

From the Garden of Tom and Jo Anne Allen

Editor's Words

A big welcome to the 26 students attending the 2019 Master Gardener Training Class, may all of your your endeavors be successful!

As the weather warms up and turns more favorable for outdoor activities, the promise of a fresh gardening season is upon us. Each and every spring I am amazed when I see green peeking out of the brown mulch as bulbs send up shoots. Soon, seeds will be germinating and trees will leaf out as the magic of Mother Nature brings everything back to life.

This is the beginning of the sixth year of our Newsletter. Be sure to check out what the 4H Garden Club members have been up to on page 15 and see the results of volunteer work accomplished by Donnie Folendorf and Linda Jones at the Young Harris Library on page 14. Jared Ogden has some thoughts about Springtime on page 13 and get to know both Judy and Jared Ogden better in the featured Master Gardener Extension Volunteer article on pages 3-4.

Happy gardening,
Jo Anne

Spring arrives on March 20, 2019 at 5:58 p.m.

Personalize Your Garden

Begin with color. What is your favorite color? Which color or colors speak to you? Plant more of the plants with blooms of these colors and incorporate some of these colors into your home's exterior and in your garden art. Visit public gardens and gardens of your friends and study books and magazines for inspiration. Create your garden to please yourself. Take a look inside your home. Sometimes sculpture and pottery that you use to decorate the inside of your home can be moved outside for summer. Be creative and inventive with your garden art. Make your own or search out flea markets and antique stores for treasures that reflect who you are and what your tastes are. Look at your garden and let your imagination guide you and then think of practical ways to make your ideas happen. Our environment and our gardens are in a constant state of change, always evolving, so embrace the change and have fun with it. As you change, your tastes and needs change and your garden can reflect these changes.

Jo Anne Allen
Master Gardener Extension Volunteer

Meet Judy and Jared Ogden

Judy and Jared Ogden are our featured Master Gardener Extension Volunteers for this quarter. They completed their Master Gardener Extension Volunteer training in April of 2015 and were certified Master Gardener Extension Volunteers in 2016. Part of their volunteer hours for certification included for Judy, judging horses as part of a 4H program and for Jared, judging pigs.

Judy is from Northwood, North Dakota, and at an early age moved to Kenedy, Texas, where she attended high school. She completed undergraduate and master's degrees in English and math at Southwest Texas State College (now known as Southwest Texas State University), the same college that Lyndon Baines Johnson, the 36th president of the United States, attended. After college, she taught English at San Antonio College.

Jared grew up in Augusta, Georgia, and attended the University of Georgia. He was commissioned into the infantry and trained and became an airborne ranger. He served in the Viet Nam War as a platoon leader, was wounded and airlifted first to Japan and then to Fort Hood. While at Ft. Hood, he met Judy during the time she was teaching at San Antonio College and soon they were married.

They moved to Columbus, Georgia, where Judy taught 6th-grade math. Later they moved to Roswell, Georgia and Judy taught at DeKalb College and Kennesaw State College. Jared after transitioning from active duty (he remained in the Army Reserves), completed a master's degree in accounting and soon started his own CPA practice. Later Judy decided to stop teaching and she and Jared started their family. He sold his practice when he was deployed to Saudi Arabia, where he served for seven months during Desert Storm. Upon returning home from Desert Storm, he worked for a small business lobby before retiring when his youngest son completed college. Judy and Jared have two sons and two daughters and four grandchildren. They are both retired and moved to Union County in 2016.

Jared and Judy are both active in their church and the Master Gardener Extension Volunteer program where Jared currently serves as recording secretary. He is also the president of the Blue Ridge Mountains Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) and is a member of the state SAR Color Guard. Dressed in a uniform designed by General Washington for his staff, the Color Guard participates in ceremonies, parades, and memorial services all over the state. Jared particularly enjoys dressing in his uniform and visiting area schools where he shows reproduced artifacts of the revolutionary period and discusses the culture, living conditions and causes of the American Revolution. He said that he has found that the school children could care less what an aging, white, bald, overweight male thinks about history, but when he is dressed like General Washington, they are fascinated. Additionally, he recently joined the Community Council supporting community outreach and education programs of Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center (GMREC), and he is president of his homeowner's association.

Jared said his hobby is procrastination and they are both passionate about reading and gardening. Jared likes pretty flowers and edibles, and Judy likes all plants and telling Jared what to do. They have raised beds where they grow vegetables and two rain gardens that Jared hand dug and a swale that runs across his back-garden area. They have a butterfly garden, an herb garden, a pollinator garden, and a cutting garden that they put in last year. The gardens are all beautiful. He calls them their cheater gardens because they bought the design and plants and all they had to do was plant following the planting diagram. They also have a lovely 20 x 6 garden at the entrance of their house that they call their extension garden, named because they planted the garden and then added extensions to each side.

Their most recent home project has been constructing an Olympic-size badminton court in their back-garden area. And a possible way off in the future project may be developing a

Hugelkultur type garden, the ultimate raised bed. This method of gardening is good for the environment and uses buried logs/wood for the growing area.

Favorite foods for Jared include anything that starts with an 'f' and ends with a 'd' and Judy's favorite is corn on the cob. I suggested that they may want to grow 'Honey Select' corn in their garden next season. And there may be plans in their future for a camping trailer and travel, visiting many of our national parks.

Something that many of their friends do not know is that Judy when she was 63, jumped out of an airplane in San Diego with Andre, a big, strong, handsome Brazilian man.

I thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the Ogdens better and hope you will too.

Jo Anne Allen
Master Gardener Extension Volunteer

Some Views of the Ogden's Gardens



March Garden Chores

Fertilize trees and shrubs following label instructions in March and follow with an application in early May and early June.

Have your garden soil tested. Your County Extension Agent has soil test bags and instructions.

If your soil test indicates that you need to add lime, it needs to be added two to three months prior to planting your garden.

Start vegetable and summer annual seeds indoors. Your seedlings will be ready to transplant into your garden after the soil temperature warms up in six to eight weeks.

Dig up the new flowerbeds you plan to plant this spring when the soil is not soggy and mix in plenty of organic matter.

Repot root bound houseplants before moving them outdoors in warm weather and begin fertilizing them at half the recommended strength.

Start planting cool season vegetables in late March – carrots, radishes, lettuce, collards, English peas, spinach, and beets. Warm season vegetables like tomatoes, peppers, corn and okra should be planted after the soil temperature warms up and the danger of frost has passed.

Complete all major pruning by mid-March. Maple trees bleed sap when pruned now, it's better to wait until late April. Do not prune spring flowering shrubs like forsythia and quince until after they have bloomed or you will not get any blooms this year.

Planting the same vegetables in the same spot in your garden year after year can lead to an accumulation of insects and or diseases in your soil. To avoid this problem, rotate your crops.

Prune crape myrtles if needed, removing any suckers, cross branches and dead branches.

Prune roses before buds break.

Plant bare-root roses.



Divide overgrown hostas and daylilies as needed when you see the leaves unfurling above ground.

Rejuvenate the pansies you planted last fall by fertilizing them with a water- soluble fertilizer as the temperature warms up.

English ivy can be very invasive. Good ground-cover substitutes include ajuga, mondo grass and creeping raspberry.

Set your lawnmower blade on its highest setting and cut back liriopse before new growth begins, being careful not to damage the crown of the plant.

Avoid mixing freshly cut daffodils with other flowers in arrangements. They produce a chemical that injures blooms. Place daffodils in another container for a day after cutting, then rinse the stems before arranging.

Cut back your butterfly bush to half the size you want it to become this summer.

Sharpen or replace lawn mower blades if you have not already done so.

Spring bulbs should be fertilized as flowers fade. Remove foliage only after it begins to fade.

Fertilize spring bulbs with a 10-10-10 fertilizer (one pound of fertilizer per 100 square feet of flowerbed).

To control weeds in your garden, apply a two to three inch layer of mulch.

Pull mulch at least six inches away from tree trunks to prevent soggy conditions and possible disease or insect damage.

Sprinkle crushed eggshells around plants susceptible to slugs and snails, especially hostas.

Lift stepping stones that have sunk below grass level, spread sand in the low area and replace the stepping stone.

Be on the lookout for summer bulbs at your favorite garden center. For better selection, buy them when they become available but do not plant them until late April or early May.

Clean leaves and other debris from ponds and water features.

Put out hummingbird feeders.

Plant clematis and other vines.



Prune evergreen shrubs back to a manageable size before new growth starts.

If you want flowers on your cactus, plant it in a small pot. Most cactuses bloom sooner if rootbound.

Plant broadleaf evergreens.

Purchase azaleas when they are in bloom so you will be sure of the color you are buying.

April Garden Chores

Plant tomato seedlings in your garden as the weather warms up, after the danger of frost has passed. To reduce the likelihood of blossom end rot on your tomatoes, work one-half handful of dolomitic lime into the soil around each plant, mulch and provide a uniform amount of moisture during the growing season.

Set out herb transplants after the danger of frost has passed.

Leaf lettuce can be grown in containers or in your vegetable garden from spring until summer. Choose a site with four to six hours of direct sunlight and expect to harvest in about 45 days.

Fertilize emerging perennials with bone meal, following label directions.

Fertilize daylilies in April, June and September.

Fertilize fruit trees just before or during bloom period, always following label directions.

Fertilize summer bulbs now. Always follow label directions.

Fertilize azaleas after blooming is complete.

Fertilize cool and warm season grasses.



When planting a new tree, keep weeds and grasses out of a 3 foot by 3 foot area around the tree to reduce competition for nutrients and moisture. Cover the ground around the tree with mulch.

Don't be too quick to remove perennials and shrubs that have been damaged by cold. Cut back the dead branches above ground but leave the roots in place until June to see if new shoots appear.

Eliminate weeds before they set seed and you will also be reducing future weed problems.

You may kill pollinating bees if you spray your fruit trees with pesticides while they are blooming. Wait until most of the blooms have dropped before spraying.

After spring-flowering bulbs are finished blooming, feed them a 5-10-15 or similar ratio fertilizer following label directions.

Prune spring-flowering trees and shrubs AFTER they bloom.

Remove faded flowers from daffodils and hyacinths but let the foliage remain and die back naturally.

Divide and transplant perennials and ground covers this month. Water them well until they are established if rain is sparse.

Protect hydrangeas and roses if a late frost threatens.



Don't rush to plant corn. Wait until the soil has warmed up, or the seeds may rot.

As the soil temperature warms up, begin planting summer flowering bulbs – dahlias, gladiolus, caladiums, cannas.

Mid to late April is a good time to plant annuals and perennials. Fertilize with a starter fertilizer that contains lots of phosphorus (the middle fertilizer number).

Dig in 2 cubic feet of soil conditioner for every 10 square feet of bed area when preparing new flower beds.

Twist off faded flowers of rhododendron after they bloom to double the number of flowers next year.

Replace the pansies in container planters with summer annuals.

For a different look on a sunny fence, trellis or mailbox, plant hyacinth bean – a fast growing ornamental bean (annual). Pink flowers give way to shiny, purple pods that are as attractive as the flowers. Wait until after the danger of frost to plant.

Buy azaleas when in bloom so you can select colors compatible with your existing landscape.

Pull up invasive plants such as Chinese privet, honeysuckle and English ivy.

Do not work in your garden when the foliage is wet to avoid spreading diseases from one plant to another.

As you see new growth on your roses, begin fertilizing (following label directions) every four to six weeks.

Container grown trees can be planted now.

Remove the thin sprouts (suckers) that grow from the base of Dogwood, Cherry and Crabapple trees and crape myrtles.

If you do not have a compost pile, start one.

Repot root bound houseplants before moving them outdoors in warm weather and begin fertilizing them at half the recommended strength. Protect them from direct sun.

Sod or sprig new lawn areas to fill in bare spots in existing lawns.

Regularly water bare-root roses and trees planted this spring.

May Garden Chores

Use rubber soaker hoses among shrubs and flowers in beds to put the water where the plants need it and to conserve water this summer and mulch with pine straw.

Water roses with a soaker hose to keep water off the foliage and possibly prevent blackspot.

Tomatoes can be grown in containers on a sunny deck or patio. Bush-type tomatoes do better in containers; plant in a large pot at least 24 inches across filled with a good quality planting soil. Fertilize and water tomatoes regularly.

Plant rosemary, basil, thyme and other herbs to enhance summer meals. Herbs are a good choice for a flower-box for your patio. Most herbs grow best in full sun, but mint, cilantro, parsley and thyme tolerate moderate shade.

Plant peppers by the first part of June for summer harvest.

Strong sun and wind are hard on new transplants. Set them out in the late afternoon so the plants have overnight to acclimate.

Fertilize your vegetable garden every four to six weeks during the summer, always following label directions.

Fertilize azaleas, rhododendrons, and roses now.



Fertilize flowerbeds with a slow-release fertilizer.

Seeds of annual flowers like zinnias, cosmos, salvia, marigolds, and nasturtiums can be seeded directly into prepared flowerbeds.

Mulch newly planted blueberry plants to insulate shallow roots from heat and drought.

Do not pile mulch against the trunks of trees. This can encourage possible insect and water problems. Mulch should be approximately 6 to 8 inches away on all sides.

Move or replant irises if they did not bloom very well last season.

Prune climbing roses after they finish flowering and it is not too late to plant roses.

Remove invasive plants like Chinese privet, poison ivy and English ivy from your landscape.

Do not remove daffodil foliage after they have bloomed until it turns yellow. The leaves absorb sunshine for energy and nutrition for the bulbs so they can bloom again next year.

Look for Lenten rose seedlings underneath your mature plants and transplant them to other shady spots in your garden.

Variegated hosta may turn green when grown in lots of sun. It's best to grow hosta where it does not get hot afternoon sun.

Plant annual vines like moon flower vine and purple hyacinth bean to disguise ugly walls and enliven fences.

Plant sunflowers for a sunny summer flower arrangement.



Weed flowerbeds and borders regularly.

Pinch out terminal growth (the tip) of annuals to make bushy plants and encourage growth.

Caladiums need generous amounts of water and fertilizer to continually produce new leaves during the summer.

Look for fire ant mounds and treat with appropriate insecticides, always following label directions.

Lichens growing on your tree trunk may be an indication that your tree is stressed from soil compaction, poor drainage or insufficient fertilizer.

Prune off sprouts from the base of crape myrtles that are being trained to an upright tree form.

Wait until after your azaleas have bloomed to prune them (if pruning is needed). This is also an ideal time to fertilize them.

Replace pansies with summer annuals and plant ornamental grasses now.

Remove faded blooms from rhododendrons to increase the buds that make the blooms for next year.

Remove low-hanging and dead limbs from shade trees.

As your spring flowering bulbs die back, plant bulb beds with annuals for summer color, being careful not to disturb your bulbs.

Rejuvenate houseplants by lightly pruning them and moving them outdoors to a partly sunny/partly shady area for the summer. Start fertilizing at half the recommended strength.

Create A Rain Garden

If you have a natural depression in your landscape near a downspout of your house, you may want to create a rain garden.

Rain gardens are landscaped areas designed to collect and utilize rainwater. They allow more water from rain to soak into the ground, reducing peak storm flows, helping to prevent stream bank erosion and reducing the risk of local flooding. Approximately 30% more rainwater soaks into the ground in a rain garden than in an equivalent area of lawn. Rain gardens can also provide valuable habitat for many birds and butterflies, adding to their beauty.

As rainwater is collected in the rain garden, it filters through soils and plants and soaks into the ground. The plants, mulch and soil combine natural physical, biological and chemical processes to remove pollutants from runoff.

They are best located in a low area of your yard where runoff tends to flow and a minimum of 10 feet from the foundation of your house or other buildings and not above the septic system.

If you decide to create a rain garden, first identify your location. Lay out the boundary using a garden hose, with the longest length perpendicular to the slope of the land. Create a low berm (a small earthen dam no more than 12 inches high) on the downhill side of the rain garden to hold back the rainwater. Minor grading may be necessary to make the bottom of the rain garden as level as possible. A shallow swale (dug out area) or corrugated drainpipe (either buried or above ground) will channel the runoff from the downspout or paved area to the rain garden.

The soil in your rain garden should be loose and sandy, allowing rainwater to quickly soak into the ground. A general rule of thumb is to have soil that soaks in one inch of water per hour. Grass or groundcover should be established along the upper edge of the garden to slow down runoff water as it enters the garden and on the berm side to stabilize it as a border.

Next, choose your plants, a mix of ornamental grasses, shrubs and self-seeding perennials that can tolerate moisture in the soil. Mulch the garden after planting, a three inch layer of shredded hardwood mulch is a good choice because it is less likely to float away. Remove weeds on a regular basis and add mulch as needed. Create an 'overflow' path for excess water for periods of excessive rainfalls and be sure to stabilize it with grass or groundcover.

Creating a rain garden can be a good thing, both for your landscape and our environment.

Source: Gardening News and Tips From Pike Family Nurseries
Jo Anne Allen
Master Gardener Extension Volunteer

What's Blooming Now

(or what has just finished blooming)

All from the gardens of Tom and Jo Anne Allen



Helleborus orientalis
Lenten Rose

Blooms in late winter, just when we need a lift before the rest of the garden comes alive, and continues well into spring.



Viola cornuta
Viola

Violas are invaluable for winter and spring color in the garden.



Salix discolor
Pussy Willow

Soft, silky, pearl gray catkins of the male plants of pussy willow, a shrub or small tree that can grow to 20 feet tall.

Springtime

Springtime seems to be the most dichotomous season of the year. Its not the contrast in the weather we experience each spring that Im referring to, its dealing with the nearly polar opposites of the visions of my gardens and the reality of my gardens.

I enter spring after having been cooped up inside, satisfying my longing for the outdoors by looking at YouTube gardening videos, pictures, and occasionally trips outside as the weather allows. During winter, my imagination magnifies and perfects the visions of my springtime gardens. During winter—poof! My images of the spring gardens become real and best of all, require no work. My gardens morph into the perfection of beauty.

In winter, the old motivation and self-help adage that you must first perceive, then believe, to achieve, becomes surreal. My perception becomes a reality which requires no effort to achieve. In winter, my gardens become the perfect gardens, the model of perfection that Plato philosophized in his explanation of our world. In Platos universe, there is an ideal model of everything. Platos model does not exist in physical form, it exists only on a spiritual level. The further things get from the perfect model, the more the imperfections creep in. (To Plato the spiritual is good, the physical (meaning the earth) is so far away from perfection, that the earth is bad. Mankind is positioned between the two because we humans consist at both a spiritual and a physical level; therefore, humans are both: good and bad.)

Anyway, during winter I conceive of such a perfect garden that I believe Plato would be proud. When springtime rolls around, and I have to work with real soil, real plants, real tools, real weeds, real weather, and use real muscles, my garden ends up looking nothing like the perfection I had concocted. Hence, for me, springtime is the most dichotomous season of the year. It is my vision versus reality.

I dont recall if Plato included the concept of human optimism and hope in his philosophical discourses of the universe, but optimism and hope certainly exist because each fall, after the flowers die back and the vegetables and fruits are no longer producing, I begin plans for next years perfect gardens. The only difference between last year and next year is that next year my gardens really will be perfect.

Jared Ogden
Master Gardener Extension Volunteer

Is Your Tetanus Immunization Up To Date?

If your tetanus immunization is not up to date, gardening can put you at risk for the disease. The tetanus bacteria live in virtually all soils and compost. Tetanus is usually associated with rusty nails but even a small cut or scrape is enough to admit the bacteria.

So, if you have not had a tetanus booster in the past 10 years, you may want to check with your health professional before you start digging.

Jo Anne Allen
Master Gardener Extension Volunteer

Young Harris Library Front Garden

Linda Jones and Donnie Folendorf took over the Young Harris Library front garden area in the fall of 2017. TUMGA had planted some things in this area at the library's request just before they had their grand re-opening after extensive interior remodeling the previous spring. No provisions were made however for the continued maintenance of the garden and it quickly filled with weeds, and because the site is so sunny and hot, the young plants became stressed. The library staff begged Grace Howard to ask TUMGA to continue the garden's upkeep and sweetened the offer by funding the project. Donnie fell for the offer and Linda volunteered to help. Together, they recently made some major changes. The lilies seen in the photo close to the walkway have been moved further back and with a donation from Grace of purple and white heirloom irises (Young Harris College school colors), and annual seeds from Donnie, this spring and summer the entrance to the Young Harris Library should be bursting with color.

Donnie Folendorf
Master Gardener Extension Volunteer



4H Garden Club

For our first meeting of the New Year, the members made plant charms! An idea we learned about from The Home Depot Garden Club (gardenclub.homedepot.com). Each child could make 2 or 3 charms. They rolled out polymer clay; cut a shape from cookie cutters; then used steel letters to punch words into their charms; and took picks to draw pictures. Once baked a few minutes in the oven, a piece of copper wire is attached to the charm so it can be placed in a flower pot. A great way to dress up your plants! The group meets the first and third Monday of each month; after school at the Towns Extension Office. A school bus drops them off and the children are picked up at about 4:30PM by their parents. If you have a child who might want to participate, please contact Crissy Figg at the extension office: 706-896-2024.

Judy Caines
4H Garden Club Leader
Master Gardener Extension Volunteer
Hiawassee Garden Club Member



Members busy making plant charms



Plant charms ready for baking

Weeds I Love To Hate
Stellaria media, Common Chickweed

Common chickweed is a mat-forming winter annual weed with numerous branched stems. It shows up in my garden areas shortly after the weather gets cold and stays (unless I pull it) until the weather warms up. It is located throughout North America except for the Rocky Mountains. Leaves are opposite, with a smooth leaf margin, oval to broadly elliptic in shape. The upper leaves do not have petioles, the lower leaves have hairy, long petioles. The stems are hairy and the flowers (white) form in clusters at the end of the stems with five deeply notched petals.

Common chickweed reproduces from seed. The best way to kill chickweed is to pull as much of it out of the ground as possible, by hand, preferably before it has time to set seed, since that is how it reproduces. It has a shallow root system and can be easily removed by hand pulling but continuous weeding may not necessarily eradicate it in its entirety. Round-up can be used, attacking the root system and killing the entire plant, but should be used sparingly and carefully, as it may kill other plants too. Label directions should always be followed.

And if you still can't get rid of common chickweed, it can be cultivated as a crop and eaten in place of lettuce in salads. Bon appétit.



Jo Anne Allen
Master Gardener Extension Volunteer

Slow Cooker Tomato, Kale and Quinoa Soup
Adapted from Chelsea's Messy Apron

1 C uncooked quinoa
2 (14.5 ounce) cans diced tomatoes
1 (15 ounce) can Great Northern beans, drained & rinsed
1 onion, diced
3 cloves minced garlic
1/2 † each dried oregano & dried basil
1/4 † each dried rosemary & dried thyme
2 bay leaves
4 C vegetable broth
salt and pepper to taste
1 bunch kale, stems removed and leaves chopped



Place quinoa, tomatoes, beans, onion, garlic, oregano, basil, rosemary, thyme and bay leaves in 6 quart slow cooker. Stir in vegetable broth and 2 cups water until combined, season with salt and pepper. Cover and cook on low heat for 7-8 hours or high heat for 3-4 hours. Stir in kale until wilted. Enjoy.

Book Corner

Title: *A Gentle Plea for Chaos*

Author: Mirabel Osler

From the library of Jo Anne Allen and she gives this book 5 green thumbs out of 5.

There is no right or wrong way to create a garden, writes Osler, and there are no absolutes. As we change and grow, so too do our creations. The joy of gardening does not reside in planting beyond our capabilities or in enslaving ourselves to some unreachable ideal, but in having our gardens celebrate and reflect the cycles of nature and the rhythms of our lives. Chapters include: *A Compulsion for Trees, The Slow Infiltration of Water, Stone, Walls and Climbers, The Wall of the Rose and Bulbs, Corms, Rhizomes and Such.*