

Live and learn, Eh?

Live and learn, Eh? And sometimes relearn, which happened last week when I made a critical error when applying a natural insecticide.

Let me set this up, with apologies to neighbors. See, my garden, true to its etymology, is a “guarded space” designed to be viewed from the house looking towards the street; outsiders are actually looking at the messy back of my fence. Concealed from the street is the orderliness, the walks, decks, small but neatly designed flower beds, and garden art.

I do plant a little for passersby, especially children looking for cut flowers or culinary herbs, or who come to admire the wildflowers, butterflies, hummingbirds, and other not-so-pretty wildlife. But overall, being a natural plant hoarder, I’m comfortable with a tumbled mélange

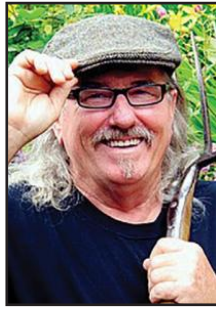
of plants coming into glory or fading to make room for others all year long.

However, rather than tend a static scene with a neat flowerbed here and there, I

dump it all together, unified with meandering walks and open, more people-friendly sitting areas. I favor stuff that comes and goes and requires little or no maintenance other than light weeding. Love plants with great

foliage, such as iris and cannas, but especially those that attract and give succor to a supporting cast of wildlife; I even have an Urban Wildlife Habitat sign by the street to clue folks that I am doing all this on purpose.

Favorite spring-summer-fall flowering plants include lantana, Africa blue basil, Guara, cannas, perennial sages and blue salvias, tropical milkweed (wow, what a looker!), zinnias, cleome,



FELDER RUSHING



GOOD BUGS ALL FLEW AWAY

and - one of the best of all - the tall “purpletop” verbena. There are others, of course, but these are among the most

dependable pollinator plants for my Mississippi meadow garden.

To top off it off as a wild-

life habitat, I include several small water features for birds, bees, wasps, butterflies, dragonflies, and the like. Most are shallow so I don’t worry about mosquitoes (though truthfully we all have ‘em anyway), and I am careful to include shallow areas with gravel for bees and butterflies, which won’t step into open water.

Neat thing about a mixed garden is how plant pests are diluted, and easier targets for increased concentrations of natural predators. However, some of my plants occasionally get overwhelmed with little aphids, leaf hoppers, and other small plant suckers; some are moved around by ants which “milk” them for sweet honeydew.

To protect the overall garden wildlife, I rarely use any sort of insecticide, other than the occasional spot-spraying of insecticidal soap or late-afternoon shot of pyrethrin (both are effective natural products). I also treat errant fire ant mounds, though I usually leave one or two alone if they aren’t in my way; fire ants eat ticks, y’know.

And I have dabbled in in-

roducing live predators such as lacewings and ladybugs/beetles; you can buy lacewing eggs, and bags of live adult lady beetles, which as both adult and larvae are voracious other-bug eaters.

Which is where I messed up, by breaking a cardinal rule of pesticide application; I did not read or follow directions before use. In my excitement, I opened up the bag of squirming beetles, poured them over some plants, and...watched them all fly away.

Surprised, I read the instructions, and too late saw that I was supposed to release them at night, lest they all fly away. Reread this column’s opening statement.

Hopefully some will come back. But I don’t want too many lest they eat all the goodies from my other good bugs. After all, you can’t have good bugs for long without aphids for them to eat.

Felder Rushing is a Mississippi author, columnist, and host of the “Gestalt Garden-er” on MPB Think Radio. Email gardening questions to rushingfelder@yahoo.com.

Businesses and Services Directory

HARRISON LOGGING

JASON FLY
Timber Buyer
(662) 316-3499
29820 HWY 8 / GRENADA, MS 38901

Jim Arnold
Attorney at Law

- Chapter 7 Bankruptcy • \$545 plus costs
- Chapter 13 Bankruptcy • No upfront fee except filing fee

Attorney Fees through the Plan
OFFICES LOCATED AT:

333 EAST MULBERRY ST. DURANT, MS 39063 662-653-6448

435 EAST BEACON ST. PHILADELPHIA, MS 39350 601-656-6914

104 SOUTH LAFAYETTE ST. STARKVILLE, MS 39759 662-324-1666

Tom Smith LAND AND HOMES
Expect More. Get More.

BARRY HOLT, REALTOR®
Barry@TomSmithLand.com
601.898.2772 office
601-613-2288 cell

118 Homestead Drive, Suite A | Madison, MS 39110
TomSmithLandandHomes.com

SCOTT PETROLEUM CORPORATION
www.scottpetroleuminc.com

SCOTT

309 Depot St.
Lexington, MS 39095

Office: 662-834-1089
Fax: 662-834-6082
Cell: 662-299-7461
kjoiner@scottpetroleuminc.com

KENNY JOINER
Division Manager

Visit us in Tchula, Lexington, Durant, Pickens and Canton.

Need help getting approved for Long Term Care?
Let us guide you through the application process.

Durant Healthcare, LLC

MON. - FRI. 9 A.M. TO 5 P.M. • 662-653-4106
15481 BOWLING GREEN ROAD • DURANT, MS

Lexington Best Home Center

• 662-834-9007 •

Affordable FUNERAL HOME OF DURANT

James and Veronica Smith, Owners

300 West Madison St.
Durant, Mississippi 39063
662-653-3770 / 662-653-3711 fax
www.affordablefuneralhomeofdurant.com

Little ads get BIG results

List in the Directory

Call the Herald at 662-834-1151

COME IN AND ORDER YOUR 2022 FORD NOW!!!

F-150
All New Expedition
Explorer
All New Ranger
All New Bronco
All New Bronco Sport
Escape
*Maverick-“NEW”
All New Super Duty

Ford

HAMMETT MOTOR CO.

INTERSECTION OF HWY. 12 W & 51 N
DURANT

CALL US AT 662-653-3141
www.hammettmotorco.com