

# YARD & GARDEN REPORT

July 7, 2015

Vol. 3, No. 7

## A Miniature, Magical World

Miniature gardening is one of the hottest trends in gardening today. Through the use of dwarf plants and your imagination, you can create a garden full of wonder.

Simple accent pieces can quickly add a sense of whimsy to your yard (Figs. 1, 3). Popular accents include fairies, gnomes and home cottages, but anything is possible. Use plants with small leaves and flowers to keep the plants and accents in proper perspective.

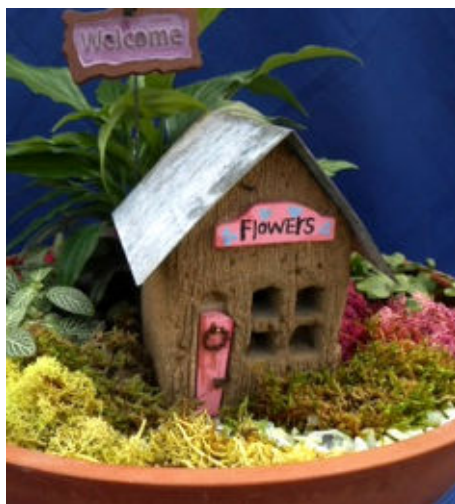
Ferns, miniature hostas and creeping phlox are popular perennials. Herbs like lemon balm (Fig. 3), oregano and rosemary work well. Dwarf evergreens are ideal.

Indoor miniature gardens usually start with a shallow pottery bowl (Fig. 2). A general rule is to make your garden 1/3 plants, 1/3 "land" (moss, bark and rocks) and 1/3 accents.

Parlor palm, schefflera and Norfolk Island pine are good choices for miniature trees. Buy them as starter plants and keep them in their small containers. Small containers will keep the plants small.

Other popular plants in miniature landscapes have distinctive colors and textures. These include peperomia, golden club moss, earth star, Rex begonia, aluminum plant and numerous succulents.

Add color to the landscape by using orchid bark or Spanish moss. Pea gravel or polished rocks can be used for paths or rivers. Add a touch of reindeer moss for a splash of chartreuse or fuchsia.



Figs. 1–3. Accents such as a door placed on the trunk of a tree, a cottage in a garden bowl, and a gnome will add whimsy and wonder to your landscape.

Get a bowl for your kids and help them build a fantasy jungle. Add a few Lego characters, elephants or dinosaurs. It's a living Legoland!

For more ideas, explore the miniature gardens on Pinterest.com. Go to the Dakota Growing website at [dakotamediaaccess.org/Dakotagrowing](http://dakotamediaaccess.org/Dakotagrowing) and watch Marcy Pflieger's *Create Your Own Little World*.

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# Get Ready for Fall Veggies!

Summertime is here and gardens across the state are looking great. The first crops are being harvested and it feels so good to be eating fresh vegetables. Don't stop now. Now is the time to begin planning for this fall's harvest.

Many vegetables thrive under the cool temperatures of autumn. New crops of spinach, lettuce and mustard can be sown in late July and early August (Table 1). These crops will be ready before the first killing frost strikes (Fig. 4).

Turnips, radishes, kohlrabis, beets and carrots taste better when they ripen in fall. The cool nights of autumn increases the sweetness of the vegetables. The most flavorful carrots and mildest radishes are those that ripen in fall (Fig. 5).

Kale is one of the healthiest vegetables on earth. If you want to make your own kale smoothies (Fig. 6), sow the seeds now. You and your kids will be drinking smoothies when the snow flies (oh, let's not talk about snow already).

Asian greens are definitely worth trying. Pak choi is easy-to-grow in fall and produces celery-like stalks. The stalks are eaten as a snack or used in stir fries. You will fall in love with tatsoi. The spoon-shaped leaves are mild and crunchy (Fig. 7).

Baby greens of Swiss chard and 'Bull's Blood' beet will add bright colors to salads. Chard and beets are relatives of spinach, a favorite veggie for summer sowing.

Add a little zip to your salad by adding some baby cilantro on it.

What are you waiting for? The days are already getting shorter. Let's squeeze as much as we can out of this gardening season.

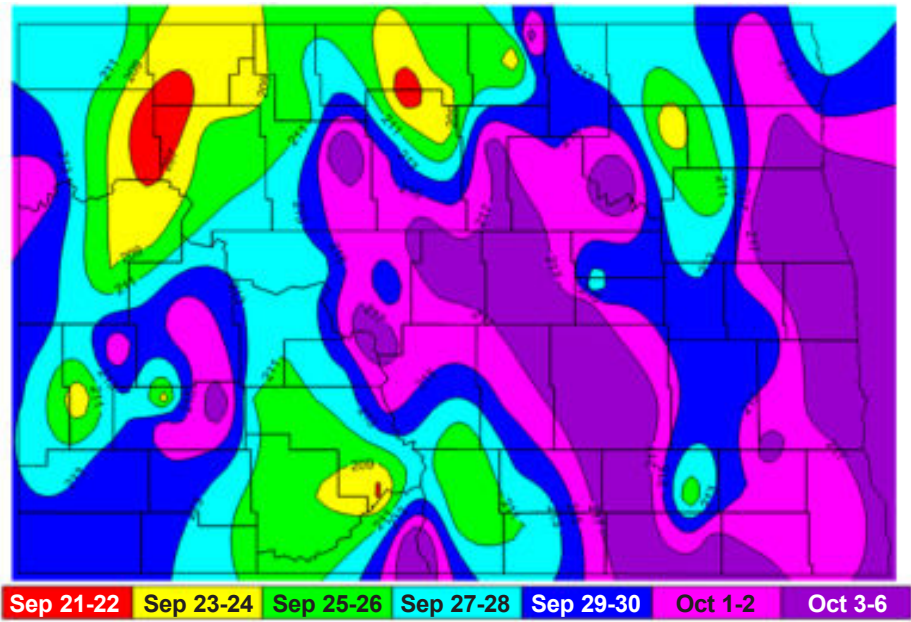


Fig. 4. Average first date of killing frost (28°F).



Fig. 5. Cool temps in fall create mild radishes. 'Easter Egg' is shown.



Fig. 6. Kale is best grown in fall. Now is the time to sow seeds.



Fig. 7. The spoon-shaped leaves of tatsoi are an easy-to-grow delicacy.

Table 1. Recommended planting dates using September 30 as first frost.

Beets	July 19
Carrots	July 6
Chinese Cabbage	July 25
Greens, Asian	July 25
Kale	July 4
Kohlrabi	Aug 1
Lettuce	July 24
Mustard	July 25
Radish	August 25
Spinach	August 7
Swiss chard	July 28
Turnips	July 28

Source: Johnny's Selected Seeds.



## RENOVATING STRAWBERRIES

After the last harvest, reinvigorate the strawberry patch for a high yield next year.



If the patch has become overrun, develop new rows by using a tiller. Narrow each plant row to a width of 12–15 inches. Row centers are spaced 36–48 inches apart. Clean out remaining weeds.



Fertilize plants with 6 pounds of 10–10–10 or a similar fertilizer per 100 feet of row. These nutrients will be used by plants to form runners and flower buds for next year's crop.

Mulch the patch in November.



## FEEDING BIRDS IN SUMMER

This is a great time to watch birds. Over 350 species visit ND in summer. Many are in their brightest plumage, including the yellow warbler (shown).



Use a high quality seed mix with oil-type sunflower seeds to attract songbirds. Clean the feeder box at least every other week and dip in a weak bleach solution to sterilize it. Niger thistle will attract goldfinches and chickadees in hanging feeders.



Orioles are found statewide and hummingbirds are common in eastern counties. These can be attracted with nectar mixes of 1 part granulated sugar dissolved in 4 parts boiling water. Orioles enjoy grape jelly and orange slices, too.



## GROWING SUNFLOWERS IN POTS

Grow a cute, dwarf sunflower in only 60 days. Varieties include 'Sunny Smile', 'Firecracker' and 'Teddy Bear'. Fill pots with potting soil mix.



Sow 2–3 seeds in a 5–6" pot; thin to 1 plant. Sow 6–9 seeds in gallon pot; thin to 3 plants.

Grow pots outdoors in full sun or near your sunniest window; this is needed for strong stems. Irrigate



regularly. Fertilize with Miracle-Gro or a similar soluble fertilizer.

Free dwarf sunflower research kits are available to kids at [www.ag.ndsu.edu/homegardenvarietytrials/](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/homegardenvarietytrials/). Kits are available beginning July 10.



## Problems found in North Dakota yards and gardens:



**Fig. 17. Fire blight on apple, pear**

Branch tips die back, often showing a “shepherd’s crook.” Prune out dying tips. Sterilize pruners between cuts. Delay any major pruning until winter.



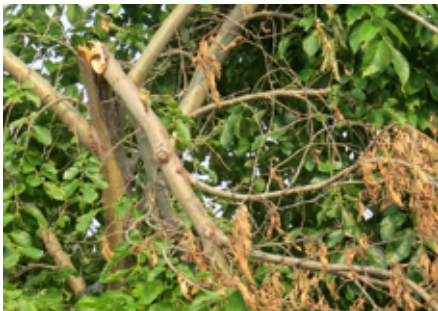
**Fig. 18. Herbicide injury**

Leaves become elongated, curled or cupped. Extreme strapping (shown) is likely due to glyphosate injury. Most woody plants survive from drift. Severe exposure may cause death.



**Fig. 19. Galls on leafy trees**

Leaves develop bumps. Ash, linden, hackberry (shown), and silver maple are often affected. Damage is mostly aesthetic. Leaves are functional. Pesticides are not useful at this time.



**Fig. 20. Storm damage**

Damaged branches from earlier storms are dying back. Prune broken branches, making clean cuts. Use a chisel or knife to smooth ragged edges of torn bark. Call a professional arborist if needed.



**Figs. 21, 22. Spruce needlecast**

Needles turn yellow and drop. Densely planted trees are most susceptible. Youngest needles (at branch tips) may be healthy. Infected needles show black spores in stomata. Spray with chlorothalonil or copper in June and early July. Remove fallen needles.



**Fig. 23. Cytospora canker**

Fungus chokes off flow of water and branch tips die back. Entire branches die. Often found on lower branches of mature trees. Prune off dead or dying branches where they meet the trunk. Prune during dry weather. Sterilize saw between cuts.



**Fig. 24. Rust on roses**

Orange pustules appear on stems and lower leaf surfaces. Leaves turn yellow and drop. Remove infected tissues. Avoid overhead watering. Apply fungicides. Grow disease-resistant varieties.



**Fig. 25. Twisted vines**

Pesticide drift or contaminated manure may cause extreme curling of foliage. Plants will be stunted and vegetables may be contaminated. Replanting is recommended for drift situations.



**Fig. 26. Ground squirrels**

Cultivate to destroy burrows (most are 1–2 feet deep). Flood burrows or seal with gravel. Use live traps, gas cartridges or rat traps baited with peanut butter. Zinc-phosphide baits are used in orchards and non-crop areas.

# Weather Almanac for June 26–July 2, 2015

Site	TEMPERATURE				RAINFALL				GROWING DEGREE DAYS <sup>1,2</sup>			
	Week				Week		2015		Week		2015	
	Avg	Norm	Max	Min	Total	Norm	Total	Norm	Total	Norm	Total	Norm
Bottineau	67	66	85	49	0.03	0.88	6.07	9.29	102	99	676	711
Bowman	69	66	91	50	0.31	0.62	7.89	8.83	115	100	649	660
Carrington	69	68	88	55	0.16	0.86	7.10	9.74	115	109	728	767
Crosby	69	64	90	54	0.32	0.72	5.92	7.59	112	89	696	638
Dickinson	70	66	93	52	0.56	0.78	6.42	9.03	122	97	689	683
Fargo	70	69	84	56	0.05	0.88	11.00	10.92	115	118	813	834
Grafton	68	67	85	53	0.32	0.87	9.64	9.81	110	101	729	732
Grand Forks	68	67	86	53	0.14	0.85	6.55	9.44	108	104	768	748
Hazen	68	68	92	48	0.15	0.75	7.73	9.08	108	106	698	791
Hillsboro	69	68	85	54	0.09	0.87	8.81	10.18	109	111	775	779
Jamestown	71	68	89	58	0.21	0.84	11.56	9.32	126	110	784	751
Langdon	67	64	84	53	0.13	0.89	7.65	9.34	103	87	662	601
Mandan	70	68	91	50	1.36	0.78	10.81	8.75	121	109	757	728
Minot	71	67	89	57	0.23	0.76	9.69	9.66	124	100	720	675
Mott	69	67	90	51	0.02	0.71	10.16	9.34	116	105	693	712
Rugby	69	66	84	56	0.00	0.86	6.38	9.84	112	98	695	722
Wahpeton	68	70	85	54	0.31	0.87	9.21	10.43	107	121	798	882
Watford City	72	66	96	55	0.62	0.73	5.95	7.79	128	99	745	698
Williston	72	69	95	55	0.10	0.65	4.79	7.33	129	112	756	806
Wishek	69	66	87	54	0.30	0.88	10.61	10.86	118	100	699	662

## DAYLENGTH (July 2, McClusky, center of ND)<sup>3</sup>

Sunrise: 5:49 AM | Daylength: 15h 54m  
 Sunset: 9:43 PM | Change since June 25: -4m

## LONG-TERM OUTLOOKS<sup>4</sup>

6–10 Day: Temp: Above Normal; Precipitation: Normal  
 8–14 Day: Temp: Above Normal; Precipitation: Normal

<sup>1</sup> GDDs for garden vegetables are not available. GDD data in this table are for corn, which responds to temperature as most vegetables grown in gardens. Data begin May 1 with base minimum and maximum temperatures of 50 and 86°F., respectively.

<sup>2,3,4</sup> Sources: North Dakota Agricultural Weather Network, [www.sunrisesunset.com](http://www.sunrisesunset.com), and National Weather Service, respectively.

## Credits

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Written by Tom Kalb, who expresses gratitude to the NDSU educators who contributed to this report: Lindy Berg, Jackie Buckley, Venkat Chapara, Kelsie Egeland, Randy Grueneich, Harlene Hatterman-Valenti, Bill

Hodous, Kasia Kinzer, Scott Knoke, Julie Kramlich, Joel Lemer, Esther McGinnis, Jared Nelson, Steve Sagaser, Kelsey Sheldon, Nicole Wardner, Todd Weinmann, Kathy Wiederholt and Joe Zeleznik.

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