A note From Katy
They beat me to it... a pair of house finch found the hanging ferns on my front porch before I even had a chance to deter them with a plastic snake. And now that they've started their nest, I don't have the heart to kick them out. So I'm forced to take and extra minute of my time to water around them and enjoy the site life being created. Shame on me.

Fertilizer and Herbicides Don’t Mix
Think twice before buying a weed and feed type product for your lawn. Instead, separate the two products, applying the right amount at the right time to the right place, saving yourself time and money. Drawbacks to applying combination products include:

- Providing too much or not enough of either the herbicide or fertilizer.
- Applying fertilizer at the wrong time of year according to turf requirements.
- Potentially damaging surrounding plants that are not approved for use on.

Take a soil test to determine the amount of fertilizer needed, only apply pesticides where a problem has been identified and always follow all label directions. Contact your local Cooperative Extension office for a free copy of a NC Lawn Maintenance Calendar.

Plant Possibility
Common Name: Live Oak
Scientific Name: Quercus virginiana
Family: FAGACEAE (beech family)
Zones: 7b to 10
Description: This native, evergreen, oak is not only known for its large, stately presence among historic plantation homes across the South, but its excellent use as a shade tree in the landscape. Slow growing but strong, small evergreen leaves remain attached throughout the year while fall acorns provide food for birds and squirrels. Growing 50 feet tall by wide, live oak prefers sun and will tolerate a range of soil types. Horizontal branches spread and become picturesque with age.

Let The Sun Shine In
Although too much sunlight can be hard on a gardener's skin, there are numerous benefits of moderate sun exposure. (source: The Harvard Medical School Family Health Guide):

- Exposure to sunlight increases the production of Vitamin D which is thought to promote bone health.
- Exposure to sunlight also helps reverse the wintertime blues also known as seasonal affective disorder (SAD).
- On top of the direct benefits, being outside promotes physical activity, improving health.

Keys To Organic Lawn Care
Five keys to keep in mind when establishing and maintaining an organic lawn.
1. Select the right location for the lawn. Do not plant a lawn on a steep slope or in a poorly drained or very shady location.
2. Prepare the site by following soil test recommendations, adding organic matter to very sandy or very heavy clay soils, and insuring good drainage.
3. Select the right grass for the location. Grasses vary widely in color, texture, and density. Choose the one best suited to the region, intended use and desired appearance.
4. Plant at the best time and choose the best planting method for the grass selected. Follow good management practices to prevent and minimize problems.
5. Develop an integrated pest management program that emphasizes the correct identification of problems and pests and the use of cultural, manual, mechanical and biological controls when necessary.
**Myth Busters:** Mulch Email is Debunked!

**Claim:** A quickly circulating email claims that mulch from Katrina ravaged areas should be avoided because it is infested with Formosan Termites that will invade your house.

**Fact (from Mike Waldvogel, NC State University Entomology Specialist):** Any type of mulch is a possible source of termites. However, the mulch from Hurricane Katrina areas is no more threatening than any other since it is subjected to the mulching process (grinding and bagging) which disrupts colony formation. It is the large (30ft. +), remaining wood debris piles that pose a concern, however Louisiana has a quarantine in place to addresses that matter appropriately. **The bottom line:** The first line of defense against termites is not worrying about your mulch. It's making sure that your house is not infested or susceptible to an infestation by virtue of having conditions conducive to termites in and around your home. You accomplish that goal through routine home maintenance and by having your house inspected by a pest management professional. Keep mulch pulled 6 to 12 inches away from the foundation of your house. For more information visit: [http://insects.ncsu.edu/Urban/termites/prevent.htm](http://insects.ncsu.edu/Urban/termites/prevent.htm)

**Spring Gardening Events**

**Edenton Rose Society** – April 17 (1p -3:30p) – Chowan Co. Agriculture Ctr. - Info: 252-482-6585

**Currituck Flower & Garden Show** – April 22 (10a-4p) & 23 (11a-4p) – Currituck High School (Barco, NC) – Info: 252-232-2262

**Gardening Lectures** – May 4, 5 & 6 (am) – Shepard Pruden Memorial Library (Edenton, NC) – Info: 252-482-4112

**Gardening In North Carolina** – May 15, 17 & 23 (3p-6p) – County Extension office (Hertford, Edenton & Gatesville, NC respectively) – Info: 252-482-6585

**Contact**

For more information on these, or any topics of interest, please contact me by:

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**Katy Shook**
Area Horticulture Agent

*Recommendations for the use of chemicals are included in this memo as a convenience to the reader. The use of brand names and any mention or listing of commercial products or services does not imply endorsement by the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service nor discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned. Individuals who use agricultural chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label before applying any chemical.*

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**Garden Humor:** How do you know when you’re obsessed with gardening?

You study for your soil test! -Jean Kane, Edenton

Know a good garden joke or quote? Email, call or send it in and I’ll post it in a future newsletter!
Mythbusters Special:  
Termites in Katrina 
Mulch Email 
(see inside for results)