

## Are Your Cardinals Red Enough?

One of the greatest treats for us gardeners is to look outside and see the bright red of a male Cardinal highlighting the landscape. Did you know how red a male Cardinal is helps the female determine if he will be a good mate? Just like humans, the female Cardinal considers if their mate will be a good provider for

a family. To help make her determination she looks for the reddest male. Here is why— animals do not produce red pigments on their own. They must forage for the best food-rich territories that provide red food. Often, you will see male Cardinals sitting in bright red berry trees. This is no coincidence. They

want to be chosen by the female, and those who know how to produce their bright red coat wins. So when a female picks a mate, not all male cardinals are red enough. Only those who proved their red food foraging skills.

Nature is truly amazing!

## Ponderings

Our business started out as a sole proprietor business called Ponds Unlimited! and we offered only water garden installation. It was a short period of time that ponds were showing up at homes everywhere and at all cost levels. Then there became a need for maintenance. Homeowners were enjoying the beauty of owning a pond, but found too much time was being spent on caring for it. That is when our maintenance program was hatched. It has been a huge success.

Today you can call for maintenance on an as-needed basis, or choose between a Maintenance 10 or Maintenance 20 program.

In 2002, we became Pond Wiser.

Now a lot of ponds are "at that age" when they need to be repaired or redesigned. Again, we have been quite successful in diagnosing the problems of leaking ponds or giving an existing pond a facelift.

Now we are beginning to experience a need for removing ponds. We are starting to receive inquiries about whether we do pond removal, and the answer is yes. So don't hesitate to call us. We can help you install a new pond, update or repair an existing pond, or even remove your pond all together.

Call 330-833-FROG. Please leave a message if you don't find us in the office. We will get back to you right away. Usually we are able to return message within 24 hours.

## Lawn Wiser Dandelions (story continued on pg. 3)

Most homeowners want to eradicate dandelions from their lawns. I thought we would try to embrace them this issue. Dandelions are some of the first flowers we see in spring. Although most people consider dandelions weeds, this plant has been used as food and medicine for hundreds of years. Maybe this is the spring you trade in your weed killer for dandelion

tea, salad or a lotion bar.

Dandelion Tea Recipe:

1. Dig dandelions and roots.
2. Cover with water and soak for several hours to loosen dirt. Drain and rinse very well.
3. Chop roots, foliage and flowers in a food proces-

sor.

4. Rinse with clean water,
5. Spread on dehydrator trays. Dry at 125 degrees F until completely dry, 12-18 hours.
6. Place tea in airtight containers. Store in pantry.
7. To brew, spoon into a steeper or make a tea

## Dandelions (continued from page 2)

bag with a coffee filter or cheesecloth. Pour hot water over dandelion tea and allow to steep several minutes.

If you opt for dandelion salad, the entire plant is edible: roots, flowers and foliage.

Dandelion Lotion Bars:

Supplies you'll need: dandelion blossoms, sweet almond oil, Vit E oil, shea butter, natural beeswax pellets, some type of container molds greased

1. Wash dandelion blossoms. Spread on dehydrator trays. Dehydrate 8-12 hours to remove

some moisture.

2. Place slightly dried dandelions in a double boiler. Cover with sweet almond oil. Add up to 1 tsp Vit E oil.

3. Fill bottom of boiler with water and bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium. Cover with lid and allow



the oil to infuse for about 2 hours. Oil will

turn deep yellow.

4. Strain oil. Discard dandelions.
5. Combine 1 part infused oil, 1 part shea butter and 2 parts beeswax in double boiler. Fill bottom of boiler with water and bring to boil. Reduce heat. Stir until melted.
6. Pour into greased molds. Cool completely before removing from molds.

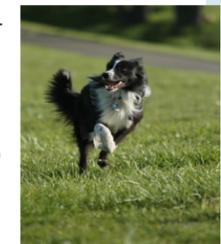
Dandelions are high in beta-carotene to repair cellular damage so use lotion for cuts and bug bites.

## Goose Nuisance?

Vic has been busy this winter and early spring right in the middle of Belden Village in Canton. Businesses are becoming wise about this wonderful service available. Having a specially-trained Border Collie for goose control is unique to our area and we are proud to bring Vic to the rescue. We use the term specially-trained when describing him; however, there

remains a lot of mystery about how this service works. It's this training that sets Vic apart from dogs that are not trained specifically for goose control. Part of this type of training is extensive knowledge of commands. Vic knows a variety of commands and will only do those if his handler tells him. Denny is the only one who han-

dles him and Vic doesn't move unless he is told. Untrained dogs also run the risk of being harmed because they do not listen to the command to stop.



"Vic, our specially trained Border Collie, is ready to control the geese at your property."

## Lake Life

If you research pond weeds for larger ponds vs. aquatic plants for water gardens, you will find several plant species sold for water gardens are the most invasive if planted in the ground of a larger pond or landscape area. A prime example is Spike Rush. This plant resembles bunny grass except the tips of bunny grass is fluffy looking like a bunny tale. (Hence, the name.) The tips of the

clumps of Spike Rush are harder, smaller brown pods called spikelets.

If you want to enjoy any of these aquatic plants, plant them in containers and try to prune them before they go to seed. The best advice is to avoid them all together.

When in the wild, you will find Spike Rush along shorelines or in shallow water.



**SPIKE RUSH**  
*Eleocharis spp.*

There are chemical treatment options if Spike Rush has already invaded. Give Denny a call at 330-685-3637 to get scheduled.



We also remove ponds.



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