



Buggin' Out

A letter from the editor of Hobby Farms.

By Karen Keb Acevedo

Midsummer is prime time for just about every creepy crawly on the planet. Whether you love 'em or hate 'em, you've got to find a way to coexist right now. Each year when I see the bugs in my garden, they're always a mystery to me ... "Is that one OK? Is that one eating my cucumbers? What should I do? How can I find out?" These are the questions I ask myself, but I've never had the answers—until now.

Read "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly Bugs," by Rick Gush, to determine which bugs are OK and which are not. There are lots of photos to help you identify who's who and advice about how to handle each one.

Speaking of bugs ... Jessica Walliser, one of our favorite HF contributors, has a new book out called Good Bug Bad Bug (St. Lynn's Press) in which she offers all her expert advice on invasive and beneficial garden insects. The book is spiral-bound, sized to easily carry outside to the garden and loaded with photos to make the job of identifying crawlies easier.

Jessica and I just returned from our speaking gigs at Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds' annual Spring Planting Festival in Mansfield, Mo., where we were warmly received. Jessica spoke about beneficial insects and all the new research being done in that area; I spoke about heirloom plants and their importance in our modern system of food production. Special thanks to everyone who came out to hear us, and to Jere and Emilee Gettle—the world's most gracious hosts! My only regret is that I didn't drive my Jeep there to load up with heirloom seedlings and amazing bargains from the antiques auction—Rubbermaid garden cart for \$40, anyone? An antique Windsor chair (excellent condition) went for \$10!

The good times didn't stop rolling there. Last year at editorial planning time, I thought it would be fun for my husband and I to do an article about the nice hay feeder he built for our small herd of Pygmy goats. Sitting together at the computer, trying to articulate exactly how the thing was built, was another story. All I could do was laugh when he said he thought I could write an article about it just by watching him build it. He laughed when I said that was like me expecting him to write an article about knitting after watching me do it. Check "How Do I ... Build a Hay Feeder?" to see how it turned out.

Finally, what would summer be without a required reading list? We've compiled a list of great modern classics, all having to do with rural life, on our website at www.hobbyfarms.com/readinglist Download the list, as well as a free Hobby Farms bookmark, and head out to the library!

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