

Authors and Photographers



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Submission Guidelines

All article, photography, and illustration queries and submissions should be sent electronically to [Dan Spurr](#). Mail hard copies to the address on our [contact page](#).

Article Guidelines

Writers interested in contributing to *Rocky Mountain Gardening* should carefully read one or more issues of the magazine to gain a sense of our purpose and tone. You don't have to be a professional to submit articles on gardening, landscaping, or to give advice on plant selection or a wide variety of concerns related to high-altitude gardening, but we would like you to write having strong experience with the subject matter. While *Rocky Mountain Gardening* is primarily a gardening magazine, we also welcome stories on gardening, garden tours, farmer's market events, food related festivals, Community Sponsored Agriculture (CSA), local food production, and stories that feature outdoor living spaces.

Material in your article should be scientifically valid. If you are expressing a belief not supported by scientific evidence (for example, the efficacy of planting by cycles of the moon), then clearly indicate the basis for your statements by saying, for example, "It is my belief that this practice works." or "This practice, based on astrology, appears to work for me." Be especially careful in making recommendations that, if misinterpreted, could be harmful to the reader or his/her property. We reserve the right to edit material for accuracy, including the addition of editorial notes clarifying current scientific understanding of the subject.

Horticultural Information

[Please cite](#) the botanical name, along with the cultivar if applicable, for uncommon plants or where the lack of the botanical name might cause confusion. Do not give the botanical name when casually mentioning common vegetables, flowers, shrubs and trees. For example, it is not necessary to cite the botanical names if you are writing "I like apples, roses, and carrots." Do cite the botanical names for specific plants, for example, "I planted a [conical dwarf Alberta spruce](#) (*Picea glauca* 'Conica')." Cite botanical names if you are writing a piece referring to more than a single species in the same genus, such as different [spruce](#) species. [The first time the genus appears in such a piece, spell it out: *Picea glauca*. Thereafter, use the first initial of the previously cited genus along with the different species: *P. pungens*.](#)

Formatting Botanical and Common Names

[Plant families are seldom required. If you include a family, do not italicize \(use Roman lettering\), but do capitalize.](#)

[Format genus and species such: *Picea glauca* italicize both, with genus capitalized. Species are typically not capitalized but there are exceptions.](#)

[For cultivar, please use Roman letters, capitalize, and enclose in single quotes: 'Conica'. The cultivar information follows the genus and species. When citing a variety, please use Roman letters, no capitalization and no single quotes.](#)

If you are writing about several plants within a genus, and the genus is plural, such as speaking of several vegetables within the *Brassica* genus, format with lower case and no capitalization: Several brassicas can be planted in the same bed.

Common names are not capitalized unless there is a proper name included: conical dwarf Alberta spruce.

Plant Lists

Plant lists in your article must either list plants by common name (if they are commonly-recognized plants) or by botanical name (genus, or genus and species where necessary). Do not mix common names and botanical names as primary entries in the same list. When the genus is also the common name, as in "iris" for example, write *Iris* if it appears in a list of botanical names and Iris if in a list of common names. If warranted you may give the botanical name followed by the common name, or vice versa, but the format must be consistent within the article. It is the author's responsibility to provide such information in the proper format. Lists deemed to lengthy to appear along with your article will be posted on our website.

Here are several websites to help you: www.theplantlist.org, and plants.usda.gov.

Before You Submit

Query us before submitting your article by e-mailing [Dan Spurr](mailto:Dan.Spurr). If we give you an assignment, we will discuss your topic, approach, and provide you with a payment quote at that time. Our standard agreement is to purchase first North American rights, with the author free to sell the work elsewhere 90 days after publication in Rocky Mountain Gardening.

Types of Articles

Features

These articles run on average, about 2,000 words. We'll discuss length on assignment. Feature stories should highlight people and their gardening related activities. Read back issues for guidelines.

Non-feature articles

On average these articles run 750-1200 words. These more narrowly focused pieces address similar themes as feature articles.

Around the Rockies

Our catchall department, these articles average 500 words. We are interested in a wide range of gardening news and events in our region: Colorado, Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, and Utah. Topics include local food gatherings and festivals, conferences, farmer's markets, private gardens, and interesting people involved in private gardening, market gardening, Community Sponsored Agriculture (CSA), and local or regional food production. Accompanying photos or illustrations are helpful.

Hands in the Dirt

This column includes "how-to" pieces of 500-800 words. Please submit drawings and/or photographs essential to reader understanding with the text.

The Compost Pile, Ask an Expert, and How Does Your Garden Grow?

We welcome submissions to these departments. Answers to readers' questions may appear in the magazine, or on the *Rocky Mountain Gardening* website. We are not able to provide individual responses to submitted questions. We cannot guarantee publication and will pay no fees.

Outdoor Art

We are interested in quality outdoor installations. Text and photos should run one page.

Manuscript Preparation

Text should be double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman font with a ragged right margin. We prefer electronic submissions of your manuscript, in Microsoft Word. If you do not have computer access, you may mail us your hard-copy manuscript. If you wish that we return the hard-copy manuscript to you, please include a stamped return-addressed envelope. We are not responsible for any lost or damaged manuscripts.

Photographer Guidelines



We seek to emphasize people in their gardens through the photography we publish. For example, while not all of the photos have to include a person, if we are publishing a story about someone's special garden, we want to see that person in her garden at least once or twice, in a natural pose, or actually gardening. We pay for photos taken by professional photographers, based on published size, and credit each one. We do not pay for photos taken by authors who include them as necessary illustrations to their writings.

Covers

Rocky Mountain Gardening, unlike other gardening magazines, focuses on high-elevation gardening interests. Cover photos should include mountains, rocks, or native species of trees, flowers, and other plants that indicate the subject matter is in the Rocky Mountain region. Again, we like to feature a person on the cover, but it's not essential if everything else about the composition is of excellent quality.

Photo Essays

We occasionally run "Flowers on Main," showing how local businesses dress up their storefronts with plants. See Volume 1, No. 1, page 62, "Red Lodge, Montana" for an example. Other themes will be considered.

The End Zone

This is the familiar "parting shot" page seen in the back of many magazines. We want *Rocky Mountain Gardening* to provide helpful gardening information, but we also want it to be fun. We aren't interested in beautiful sunsets; we'd rather "The End Zone" submissions make us chuckle.

Photo Submissions

Digital images are strongly preferred. Photographs should be submitted in .jpg or .tiff formats. 300 dpi. If you're not familiar with measurements of resolution, be sure to set your digital camera to the highest setting. We prefer that you e-mail your digital images. However, slides and prints will be considered, but must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped return envelope if you wish us to return your work to you. We are not responsible for any lost or damaged material.

Illustrators

Please query us, or submit samples of your work by [e-mail to the editor](#), or by regular mail.

Recipe Guidelines

We'd like our readers to be able to easily re-create recipes submitted with articles. Our technical nutrition editor also requires this information to prepare an accurate nutrition analysis for the recipe. When submitting recipes, please include the following:

- Recipe title.
- Precise number of people the recipe will serve.
- The portion size that equals one serving. Indicate serving size in cups, ounces, grams, etc.
- Give the precise measurement for each ingredient. Clearly identify exact standard measurements in teaspoons, tablespoons, cups, quarts, gallons, ounces, pounds, etc. Please do not use phrasing like "a pinch," "approximately a handful," "2 medium onions," "1 bunch," etc. If portions of the recipe use pre-purchased items such as pastry shells, cookies, crackers, candy sprinkles, etc., indicate the measurement of the item so readers will know how much to purchase.
- Give very precise directions for preparing the recipe. State how long one should mix, whip, chill, heat, boil, simmer, freeze, thaw, bake, etc. Indicate how to prepare ingredients by stating how fine or thick an item should be chopped, minced, sliced, etc.

- If some ingredients are to rest, chill, freeze, etc. for a period of time before combining them with other ingredients, indicate the precise amount of time, such as "chill for 12 hours in the refrigerator," rather than saying, "chill overnight."
- Tell readers what size and type of bowl, pan, baking dish, skillet, pot, cookie sheet, etc. one should use when preparing and cooking the recipe. For example, rather than stating, "bake in a medium baking dish," state the exact size of the baking dish, "bake in an 8x10 baking dish."
- Include cooking or baking temperature and the amount of time to cook or bake. If items should cool or chill before serving, indicate the precise amount of time.