Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian

Gremlins of the garden

Proven Winners two new releases, jet-black leafed crapemyrtle, and a sun tolerant gardenia

The devilish looking gulf fritillary caterpillar on the 'Witchcraft' passion vine.

Deer

Deer demolish gardens with their dining desires. The only sure way to keep them away from your sacred spaces is to build a tall fence enclosing your property. Since my garden is fenced and protected, I welcome the doe and her twin fawns on their daily 6:30 p.m. visit to graze on my grassy slope. Sometimes the stags sharpen their antlers on my oaks and often leave me a gift of them.

Turkeys

Turkeys fly over those fences to forage for berries, bugs, and buds. Living in my pines, I sometimes have as many as two dozen gobbling and scratching. I've watched how they share the bounty of their discoveries with some of the birds shaking branches to release fruit to their young waiting below.

Elves, fairies, and gnomes are invited to roam my haunted garden to protect and serve. If you get an infestation of any of the "beastly bad" or when the "pesky players" are bewitching and injurious to your property, it may behoove you to call in the ghostbusters, also known as licensed depredators for nuisance wildlife control. R.I.P.

Spooky Shrubs

Ending this article on a lighter note, if you are looking for an all-black bush to showcase for Halloween, Proven Winners developed a crapemyrtle called Center Stage Red that boasts jet black leaves with stunning summer red blooms. I'm partnering this black beauty with a heat-tolerant gardenia, Steady as She Goes. Shrubs with names that evoke goosebumps include Ghost Weigela, Abracadabra Hydrangeas, and Handsome Devil Viburnum.

As October comes to an end, I wish you zombie thrills, frights, and chills. May the grim reapers stay away from your garden. Charge up your broomsticks and have a very happy, safe Halloween.

Happy gardening. Happy growing. Trick or Treat!