

# You Cannot Grow Roses Without Getting Dirty

Entry for the “Dirty Hands” competition at  
Kingdom Arts & Sciences Festival

Manus MacDhai  
MKA Scott Dean  
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Back in 2014, I wrote an article about growing period roses in central Atlantia.<sup>1</sup> Since that article, I have continued to grow roses, mostly those varieties that I believe were grown in Europe and the Mediterranean Basin prior to the 17th Century, and one thing I can state definitively: **It is a dirty business.**

The majority of my rose bushes are currently growing in pots and one of the advantages of growing roses in containers is that it generally makes them easier to weed. However, I still have about a dozen bushes planted in the ground in my rose beds and they require weeding. There is always the grass that invades from the lawn and well as the horse nettles that seem to pop up out of nowhere. However, it is the wild grape and the blackberry that are the most insidious. Both managed to get established in one of my rose beds. It is a constant battle to remove them, requiring not only cutting back the canes, branches, and vines, but also digging out the stumps, runners, and roots. January and February are often the best times to dig out the stumps and roots for a number of reasons:

- The rose bushes are mostly dormant. That makes it easier to maneuver around the rose bushes
- The ground tends to stay damp since the sun really isn't strong enough dry out the ground. This makes digging and pulling out the roots of the weed a lot easier.
- It is not so bloody HOT!

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<sup>1</sup> <https://roses.scottandlara.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Growing-Medieval-Roses.pdf>

## Digging out weeds:



## Preparing to plant a rose bush:

I offered a new class entitled “How to plant a Rose Bush without Getting Bitten” at the most recent Atlanta University. In preparing for the class, I need to prepare a space in the rose bed... Again, a dirty business as you can see in the uploaded video entitled [Getting Dirty Prepping the Bed](#). I also include the following after shots of just how dirty I ended up:

