

WIMGA



May 2020

WISCONSIN MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION
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WISCONSIN MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION

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WIMGA Vision - The Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association will be the collective voice for the local Master Gardener Associations and individual members in active support for their horticultural projects and services; build networks to enhance outreach, share ideas and promote projects; and help extend UW-Extension's educational role to the public.

Master Gardener 2020 Conference Regrets

Washington County Master Gardeners were looking forward to welcoming other Master Gardeners from around Wisconsin to our 2020 conference in West Bend. However, we do not see a way to safely plan and host the conference with the appropriate social distancing. It is with great disappointment that we have cancelled the conference for this year.

No More Gloom and Doom!

Can we all agree that COVID-19 has turned our lives up-side-down, and changed the world as we know it? And it's getting old, right? Mike Maddox used this phrase in a meeting I was part of recently, and it sums up what I've been trying to do lately: look for the positives—there are always some, if you look hard enough.

- You're safer at home: and evidently spending a lot of time cleaning closets and garages. Our town recycling facility has never had so much trash brought in!
- Home cooking and baking is on the "rise": I'm getting calls from friends who want to know how to make sourdough bread, since there's no yeast to be had in the store!
- Gardening at home: seed sales are phenomenal. Nathan Zondag of Jung Seeds notes that it seems like a lot of new gardeners are trying their hand, and parents/grandparents are using this as an opportunity to teach hands-on science with their kids, including me.
- Only MG activities that can be done from home are allowed right now: could that include some personal reflection time? What do you feel accomplishes the most in your community? Which projects are you most anxious to get back to? Are there some things that you could sunset?

Across the state, garden conferences, hands-on classes and school projects have been cancelled. I share your disappointment, and I hope that you can find the positive: planning for next year is practically done; or you now have time to write garden articles or plan new educational programs. Being part of the University of Wisconsin gives us great resources and recognition; it also means we are a team and will act as team players. As we all watch how this pandemic evolves, I will continue to follow the rules from the UW, practice kindness and understanding, and stay positive. I hope you can too.

A couple notes on upcoming WIMGA activities: the spring face-to-face meeting with local representatives and Board members was cancelled, and has not been rescheduled yet. Washington County, the host for the September State Conference, has also decided to cancel due to expected limits on group sizes to maintain social distancing.

Thanks for your patience.
Becky Gutzman
WIMGA President

Wisconsin Winners
2019 AAS Display Garden Landscape Design Challenge
“Re-Use, Recycle, Re-Imagine”
NJ Jahnel-Barnes-WIMGA

Several Wisconsin Master Gardener groups entered the International All-America Selections’ 2019 Landscape Design Challenge. The Challenge used the theme of “Re-Use, Recycle, Re-Imagine” to inspire this year’s creations. Each garden was free to interpret the theme in their chosen manner, resulting in some very fun, creative and interesting displays.

For this challenge, AAS provided the gardens with recent AAS Winner seed and plants. The gardens also had the option to incorporate older AAS Winners in their design to illustrate the “Re-Imagine” theme. Gardens not only had to create and execute a design based on this year’s theme, but also, were encouraged to generate publicity and hold events to share the story of All-America Selections and AAS Winners.

Gardens were divided into three categories based on the number of visitors per year: Category I: fewer than 10,000 visitors per year; Category II: 10,001 – 100,000 visitors per year; and Category III: Over 100,000 visitors per year.

Category I: fewer than 10,000 visitors per year – Second Place Winner: Kenosha County Center AAS Display & Demonstration Garden, Kenosha, Wisconsin.



The judges thought the way Kenosha County Center integrated this year’s theme into their garden was very imaginative and clever. Their write-up explained the emphasis on education while creating a lovely garden design.

With community and visitor outreach comprising 20% of the score, Kenosha scored high points for their use of social media and their own Master Gardener newsletter. Lastly, a scavenger hunt created visitor involvement and really got people to look at, through and into the garden beds.

As a final “Wow”, the harvest from the AAS Edible Winners was donated to the local Sharing Center Food Bank to feed the less fortunate.



**Category 1 Honorable Mention: “Excellent Use of AAS Edible Winners”:
Hancock Ag Research Station, Hancock, Wisconsin.**



Category III: Over 100,000 visitors per year – First Place Winner: Boerner Botanical Gardens, Milwaukee

Kudos to the group at Boerner for pulling off a first place win this year! Their theme interpretation was called an Alice-In-Wonderland garden where many recycled and re-



used products were made into props from the book:

Hanging baskets became tea cups, AAS Gypsophila Winners formed a clock base, mushroom forms planted with AAS Pole Bean Winners, and old pallets became larger than life playing cards.

The garden took the opportunity to educate visitors about AAS via tours, an Ecology Conference and several onsite talks. We think Alice would be pleased!



All-America Selections used the following contest judges who are industry experts in the field of horticulture and landscaping: Jeff Gibson, Landscape Business Manager, Ball Horticultural Company; Sean James, Owner, Sean James Consulting and Design and Barbara Wise, Sales and Marketing Manager, Crescent Garden.

All-America Selections is a non-profit organization founded in 1932 to anonymously test new plants for home gardening. They utilize a network of 90+ volunteer judges in over 50 trials grounds across North America to rate entries against comparisons. They then use an active publicity program to promote the best performers that are declared AAS Winners.

Grant County Fennimore Butterfly Sanctuary

Sandy Vold-WIMGA

The new butterfly and pollinator-friendly garden outside the Doll and Toy Museum in Fennimore is a model of a community project done right. Spearheaded by Grant County MGV Marsha Schneider, it involved not only master gardeners, but community residents and businesses who donated money, materials and time to make it happen.

Schneider, who frequently walked by the museum, said, “I could just imagine a garden there. There was a big open canvas on the south side of the building.” She approached Grant County MGVs with the idea, and once the group approved it, Schneider went to work getting word out to the community.

Area businesses agreed to put out donation cans for the project; she applied for and received a \$200 grant from Grant County MGVs. “I got word out on Facebook, I contacted the Chamber of Commerce; I put up posters and made calls to businesses which might be able to help with the project.” The logo for the project was **“Community + Pride = Beautiful Things.”**

All told, she wound up with \$1,500—the grant, about \$300 from community donations, and another \$1,000 worth of materials, mainly from area businesses. “The response from the community was incredible,” she said. “I’d tell somebody of a need and pretty soon there was a volunteer”.



Volunteers dug and prepared the 12 x 12-foot round bed in the summer and fall of 2018, applying compost and mulch, then letting it settle until spring. Over the winter, Schneider researched native plants to benefit the butterflies and keep the maintenance low.

They planted in the spring of 2019 and, she said, “I could swear those roots hit the cow manure and went woo-woo!” One major purchase was a stunning habitat house, skirted with colorful flowers, which, said Schneider, was covered with bees and butterflies. Signs identify the various plants.

Although the garden debuted only last summer, it was obvious that it has tremendous educational potential.

Since the museum was already a destination for area grade school tours, the garden became part of those tours and children looked for eggs and cocoons on the milkweed. The museum itself draws 900-1,000 visitors a year, and the addition of the garden means more opportunity to make people aware of the issues relating to pollinator decline.

The garden is now officially registered as a Monarch Way Station, and Schneider hopes to add a sensory herb garden this year, perhaps adjacent to the butterfly garden, where visitors can touch and smell the plants.

Pictures taken by Marsha Schneider



Think Only Jumping Worms Are Invasive?

Submitted by Kate Langer, Outagamie County Master Gardener

The City of Appleton's Scheig Center Gardens, located within Appleton Memorial Park recently hosted a prairie walk. Speaker, Dick Nikoli, retired wildlife biologist with the DNR had been instrumental in prairie plantings over the years. The several hours spent wandering around the Scheig prairie grounds with Dick and listening to him spew forth knowledge was a real education.

Most of us have heard of purple loosestrife, *Lythrum salicari*, and how it has been invading wetlands. Now that a beetle has been developed to attack this invader, the focus of the DNR has shifted to another invader, teasel. The teasels, *Dipsacus fullonum* and *Dipsacus lactiniatus*, are perhaps worse than purple loosestrife because they are so adaptable. In the past, we have seen teasels in ditches and wet areas. Now the teasel has adapted to drier, higher ground. This rampant invader will soon overtake fields and roadsides as it adapts to new conditions.



Those of us attending Dick's presentation were shown the difficulty of eradicating the biennial. No beetle or insect has yet been developed to stop this invader and each plant is capable of producing over 2,000 seeds which have an 80% germination rate. The seed heads were once used in decorative dried floral arrangements – what a great dispersal method for the uninitiated. Eradication is accomplished with hand digging, decapitation prior to seed set, or herbicides (need to be handled carefully when applying near a wetland).

Once I got past that one, I took a look at the “Wisconsin Wildcards” packet that was handed out at the workshop. They’re available from the DNR and are a great educational tool for those who are interested. They feature colored pictures to help identify invaders, and suggested eradication methods. I can see these being used by school children on a field trip because they are small and easy to carry in a pocket.

I knew many Invasives on the wildcards, but one really surprised me - earthworms. Yes, the lowly earthworm that we all view as a sign of healthy garden soil. No, not jumping worms! The common earthworm is not native to Wisconsin forests. According to the DNR wildcard, “native earthworms were destroyed during the last ice age. Thus, forests as we know them evolved without earthworms. Earthworms consume fallen leaves which provide the proper condition for tree seedlings and other native plants to grow. Earthworm-invaded forests are found throughout the Northeast and Midwest regions of the United States. They are easily spotted by the lack of leaf litter and often by the presence of invasive plants.” Hmm, habitat for buckthorn???

I’m not going to start a crusade against Invasives, because they will always be with us. But I will give a shout out to the value of taking advantage of the many seminars and workshops that are sponsored by the Master Gardener Association. You will always be in the company of other curious minds that want to know.



Chiwaukee Prairie State Natural Area is part of the Chiwaukee Prairie-Illinois Beach Lake Plain. This 4,500-acre landscape represents the highest quality remaining coastal area in southeast Wisconsin and in all of Illinois. It was designated a Ramsar Wetland of International Significance in 2015.

Encompassing a narrow run of shoreline along Lake Michigan in southeast Wisconsin, Chiwaukee Prairie State Natural Area is part of the last unbroken stretch of prairie of its kind in the state and home to more than 400 plant species, including 26 rare plants. The Prairie is also home to a variety of wildlife from 75 species of grassland and wetland birds to red foxes, woodchucks and numerous reptiles, amphibians and small mammals.

This winter, mowing, cutting and burning have cleared many acres of invasive brush and dried plant material, preparing the Prairie for the annual Spring renewal of life. The photos that follow offer just a few of the signs of renewal occurring during this April Earth Month.

Chiwaukee Prairie is indeed a jewel in Wisconsin’s landscape.



Striking patch of spore producing structures on moss in the Savanna. by Jay Johnson



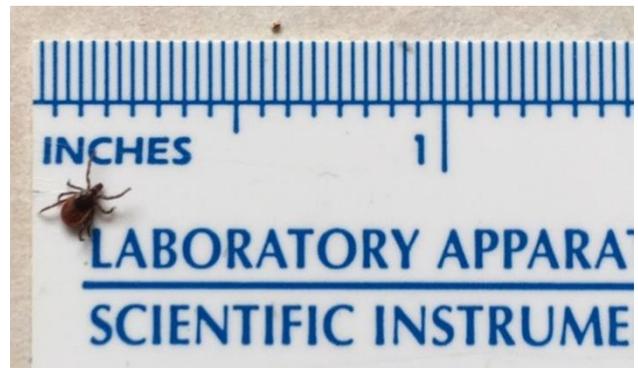
A clutch of ground nesting Woodcock eggs. by Rick Wadleigh



A closeup view of Pussy Willow blossoms. by Kelly Temple



"Ice crystals were fleeting on the petals...as sunlight edged its way into the shadows." Marsh Marigolds by Eric Howe



First wood tick of the season worn and photographed by Nathan Robertson.

What do Poison Ivy and ticks have in common? That was too easy. Of course, we want nothing to do with either. Unfortunately, they both get a boost from climate change.

- Milder winters produce bumper crops of ticks early and long.
- Warmer temperatures and rising levels of carbon dioxide have Poison Ivy behaving like it's on steroids with more patches, spreading faster and contacts being more toxic; "the rash that lasts!".

In addition to wood ticks, deer ticks which can carry Lyme Disease are present in the Prairie. Dress and/or spray to prevent ticks attaching and always check after visiting. Quick removal can limit disease transmission.

PLANT BASED DIETS

Submitted by Bev Kindschy, Outagamie County Master Gardener, in collaboration with Chef Jeff Igel, Fox Valley Technical College Culinary Arts & Hospitality Instructor

With the movement towards eating healthier, I reached out to Chef Jeff Igel, FVTC Culinary Arts and Hospitality Instructor, to get his insight on plant-based diets. Chef Jeff shared that a plant-based diet is an eating plan that consists primarily of consuming plants and plant-based foods such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes, grains, seeds and the plant itself. Other foods that might be forgotten as plant-based foods include herbs, spices, oils and aromatics from different types of plants. He stated that for decades the American diet has included far too many foods that are simply not good for our bodies. Partially-hydrogenated fats, saturated fats, fried foods, white flour, white pasta, refined sugar in both foods and beverages as well as the myriad of food additives make up many of them. In addition, the caloric consumption of the typical American diet has skyrocketed. Not surprisingly, so have our weights, waistlines and the rates of many self-inflicted diseases including diabetes and preventable cancers. In an effort to combat this health crisis, many people have worked to adopt a healthy diet combined with a more active lifestyle. Included in this movement to eat better is increased consumption of plants and plant-based products.

I asked if a plant-based diet is vegetarian or vegan? He replied, a plant-based diet is not necessarily vegan or even vegetarian. A plant-based diet follower could consume anywhere from 51% - 100% of his or her diet from plants with the balance coming from animal sources. Several health organizations strongly encourage that the food on at least half of our plate come from plant based-sources.

Examples of plant-based foods having a high-protein content include Tofu and Edamame, Lentils, Chickpeas, Almonds, Quinoa, Chia and Hemp seeds. Some plant products, such as soy beans and quinoa, are complete proteins, which means that they contain all nine essential amino acids that humans need. When you are grocery shopping look for plant-based items such as Kale chips, chickpea or lentil pasta, coconut oil, cashew butter or pea milk. Even Burger King now offers the Impossible Whopper where the protein is a blend of soy and potato proteins.

In summary, plant-based diets emphasizing local ingredients are more environmentally friendly than diets that rely heavily on mass-produced animal products and produce. People who follow plant-based diets tend to have smaller environmental footprints. Adopting sustainable eating habits can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, water consumption and land used for factory farming, which are all factors in global warming and environmental degradation.

CHEF JEFF'S BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUP

1 Onion, yellow, medium, diced small
4 Tablespoons Butter (1/2 stick)
1 Squash, butternut, peeled, seeded, chunked (about 2 pounds) 6 Cups Water
1 Tablespoon Chicken Base (or bouillon), dried
1 Teaspoon Pepper, black, ground
1/4 Teaspoon Nutmeg, ground
Milk or Cream – Optional
Salt – To Taste

1. In a medium kettle, sweat the onions in the butter over medium low heat.
2. Add the butternut squash, water, chicken base, pepper and nutmeg.
3. Bring to a simmer and cook until the squash is tender, about 20 minutes.
4. Transfer the soup to a blender and puree until smooth.
5. Milk or cream can be added at this point if desired. Adjust the seasonings if necessary.
1. Serve immediately with rustic bread for a healthy and satisfying meal. Can be garnished with a little sour cream. Yield: 6 Cups

JEFFREY S IGEL OR "CHEF JEFF" CHEFJEFF@FVTC.EDU

Chef Jeff is the Program Director of the Culinary Arts & Hospitality Department at Fox Valley Technical College. He focuses on outreach for the Culinary Arts, Accelerated Culinary Arts, Hospitality Management, Foodservice Production, Advanced Baking and Kitchen Steward programs. He has been a Professional Chef for more than 35 years, holds three degrees including a Doctorate of Barbecue Philosophy (Ph.B.), has received several honors/awards and holds several board positions.

Grow Beautiful Water Gardens While Keeping Our Waterways Healthy

By Melinda Myers

We're lucky to be living in Wisconsin, a state filled with beautiful lakes and waterways. Adding water gardens and ponds to our landscape is a way to bring a bit of this natural beauty and the wildlife it attracts to our backyards. Whether planting your own or advising others, it's important to select the right plants and manage them properly to ensure you grow beautiful water gardens while also protecting our waterways and lakes.

Filling water features with native plants is the first step in growing success and keeping our waterways safe. For tips, lists and information on Wisconsin native water plants read the online brochures [What's in your Water Garden](#) and [Great Lakes Water Garden Plants](#) and be sure to watch our **video: [Avoid Invasive Plants When Growing a Water Garden](#)**.



A beautiful, healthy pond is free of invasive and overly aggressive plants. If you have these, put them in the trash, labeling the bag "Invasive, approved for landfill by WDNR." (Photo courtesy of MelindaMyers.com)

Always purchase plants from a local reliable source. Avoid online sources that sell restricted and invasive plants that should not be grown in our water gardens, ponds and lakes. Avoid aggressive plants when adding a few non-natives to extend the bloom time and beauty of a water garden. These plant bullies can crowd out their neighbors and increase time spent on maintenance.

Invasive and nuisance plants tend to start growing earlier and keep growing later in the season, giving them an advantage over our native plants. These plants reproduce easily and rapidly take over a disturbed area, crowding out native plants and disrupting the natural balance needed to support our pollinators and wildlife.



Choose native plants, such as blue flag iris, or non-aggressive species that won't take over your pond or water garden. (Photo courtesy of MelindaMyers.com)

Help prevent the spread and future infestations. Don't share plants with others or release them into our waterways and lakes. You may be passing along invasive species or problems for them to manage. Instead remove and destroy any aggressive, invasive and restricted plants from your water features and ponds. Seal these plants in a plastic bag, label as "Invasive, approved for disposal by WDNR," and throw them in the trash.

If you discover an invasive species in your pond or nearby waterway let the Wisconsin Department of Natural resources know so they can contain and manage the problem. And if you are interested in volunteering to help control these unwanted plants email DNRAInfo@wisconsin.gov. So please join me in protecting our valuable lakes and waterways. Together we can make a difference!

Melinda Myers is the author of numerous books, including Small Space Gardening. She hosts The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD series and the nationally syndicated Melinda's Garden Moment TV & radio program. Myers web site is www.MelindaMyers.com. Photos courtesy of MelindaMyers.com

NJ'S BITS AND BOBS:

I am an avid reader and I read across many genres from gardening to history to science, etc. I came across this 'new-fangled' indoor garden recently in my reading. I had to share it with you as I doubt any of us will have the money to purchase this unit when it does come on the market. Very high end, snazzy, but is it practical? I'd love to test it but I'm sure the marketers have a very upscale audience in mind.

"The Rotofarm" Is a NASA-Inspired, Sculptural Hydroponic System

*Posted by Gregory Han in Design-Milk.com
04.20.20 (edited by NJ)*



Are you amongst the new “crop” of those interested in growing your own fresh herbs and vegetables from home right now? Most leafy greens, herbs, microgreens/sprouts, edible flowers, etc. can be grown indoors throughout the year with the right set-up balancing amounts of light and water, which is exactly what this indoor hydroponic gardening system aims to deliver in a decor-friendly form factor suitable for open display in the kitchen.

Equipped with a 360-degrees rotating LED lighting system, it borrows from the well-established science of hydroponic growth systems, eliminating the need for soil to grow plants quickly and easily, optimized further with app-controlled automation controls that takes the responsibility of watering and lighting.

The system was developed referencing research done by NASA related to plant growth in zero-gravity conditions, resulting in a rotating design that spins every 46 minutes uses a sun-replicating LED lighting source in its center. The rotation motion not only delivers evenly distributed light, but also eliminates the growth-restricting force of gravity to improve growth.

Because the lighting system can introduce a bright light source into any space, there’s the option to use an Eclipse Cover – (sort of sunglasses) that also increases humidity while maintaining sufficient air flow across growing crops. It is outfitted with 20 slots for plants, enough to supplement a diet with fresh herbs and vegetables. The system does require the use of custom-designed seed pods, composed of 100% biodegradable coconut fiber and a growth medium for seeds to turn into sprouts and eventually full-grown produce to harvest



I have discovered some hardy Brussel sprouts still growing under my leaf mulch in one of my garden beds. If you remember, last year I found carrots that had over-wintered. I am really not a lazy gardener just sometimes cover up plants to see if they can eke out a few more months of growing. Especially since our area of SE Wisconsin had such a short summer last two years with so much wet cold weather in the beginning.

My Earth Day celebration was muted this year as it was for all of us. Hard to believe that it has been 50 years since it began. I usually am active in several events in our area and was sad to see this momentous occasion have to be celebrated quietly. Children and adults all learn so much from the activities planned yearly. I feel like a kid again while potting up seeds and making crafts with the youngsters.



UPCOMING EVENTS: Because so many of our events are 'on hold' or cancelled at this point. We decided to share some groups from around the state that might interest you as you look for education hours and just to keep your gardening mind growing and not wilting.

Photos, info on every plant found in Wisconsin !! Virtual Flora of Wisconsin (<http://wisflora.herbarium.wisc.edu>) Checklists by county, flower color, season & more.

Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society www.wisconsinhardyplantsociety.org
Programs, speakers, newsletters, trips, garden tours etc.

American Conifer Society www.conifersociety.org
College scholarships, research grants education seminars, garden walks & tours

The Wildflower Preservation and Propagation Committee www.thewppc.org
Outdoor classroom grants, landscaping seminars, natural yard tours, native plant rescues

Last but not least . . . **Wild Ones** www.wildones.org
Native plants and insects need each other to survive. You also know those same insects and plants are the basis of the entire food web— supporting wildlife from hummingbirds to hedgehogs to humans. Wild Ones is based in Neenah, WI.

We love your WIMGA projects, horticulture articles or Grant ideas. **Send us your stories and pictures.** Some things to note about your WIMGA projects: the number of volunteers and hours spent, contribution to the community whether in education or with place-making and collaboration with UW-Extension. **Articles and ideas for the Newsletter may be submitted to our editors,** Nancy Jahnel-Barnes at westcoasternancy@gmail.com or Hali Dessecker at halirenee@yahoo.com.

May 2020 Newsletter

Contacts

Wisconsin Master Gardener Association President

Becky Gutzman
W3616 Old B Rd
Rio, WI 53960
(920) 382-4511; buckhill@centurylink.net

Wisconsin Master Gardener Association Treasurer

Byron Hacker
N4511 Hwy. 57
Chilton, WI 53014
(920) 849-2654; plantdr47@gmail.com

Newsletter Editors

Hali Dessecker
halirenee@yahoo.com
Nancy Jahnel-Barnes
westcoasternancy@gmail.com
Sandy Vold
ksclearcreekretreat@gmail.com
Sadie Zobel
sadie.zobel@gmail.com

Visit the WIMGA Website at <http://www.wimga.org/>



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

UW-Extension Master Gardener Program Office

Mike Maddox, Outreach Program Manager
(608) 265-4536; mike.maddox@wisc.edu
Amy Freidig, Outreach Program Specialist
akfreidig@wisc.edu
Department of Horticulture
1575 Linden Dr.
University of Wisconsin
Madison, WI 53706
<http://wimastergardener.org/>

The Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association Newsletter is published 6 times a year (January, March, May, July, September and November) dedicated to providing horticulture education and information about the Master Gardener Program to state association members.

Articles, artwork and ideas are welcome, but final selection and editing are the responsibility of the editorial staff.