



WIMGA

WISCONSIN MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION

Serving its members since 1992

WIMGA Mission: WIMGA is the collective voice for Wisconsin Master Gardeners who are cultivating the garden resources that bring our communities to life.

WIMGA Vision: We provide inspirational leadership and energy to Wisconsin Master Gardeners by:

- ❖ Sponsoring continuing education opportunities
- ❖ Supporting local horticultural projects with financial assistance
- ❖ Fostering leadership and mentoring skill development
- ❖ Promoting communication and information through multiple media platforms.

To Be the Best, Study the Best!

Jeanne Mueller, Ozaukee MG

A “virtual event of epic proportions” celebrating “gardening, innovation, and sustainability”! Welcome to the International Master Gardener Conference 2025 – “There is no Planet B”. During the week of August 25-28, I will cease picking tomatoes and pulling weeds to plant myself in front of a computer for all 41 1/2 hours of the IMGC.



I invite you to do the same.

For 4 full days, the Texas Master Gardener Program has assembled some of the best of the best speakers in the world. They will help us discover new techniques, embrace sustainable solutions, and be part of the effort shaping the future of our Planet A (since we don't have a Planet B). Take a look at the schedule posted -[IMGC2025](#):

In all, attendees can participate in 10 breakout sessions, 3 movie nights, 4 lunch break virtual tours, and 9 keynotes including:

- Dr. Cary Fowler, “father” of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, presenting “Seeds of Peace and Security”
- Doug Tallamy, professor, author, entomologist, and WIMGA’s 2025 Annual Meeting speaker, presenting “Next Steps for Nature: 500 Questions (and Answers) for How to Save Nature in Our Yards”
- Joe Lamp’l, creator, host, and executive producer of Growing a Greener World®, presenting “Greening Your Garden While Protecting the Planet”
- Robert Pavlis, author with a passion for dispelling gardening myths and sharing evidence-based advice, presenting “Gardening Myths”.

The BEST News! Save your money. Unlike past IMGCs, this conference will be held virtually via Zoom. No need to pack a suitcase nor purchase a plane ticket. This live event will be delivered to you. And unlike past conferences, attendees will receive access to recorded presentations for five months following the event. Early Bird Registration is \$185, after June 21, the fee is \$210. Registration closes August 15.

Breakout Sessions Come down the rabbit hole with me. My list of must-attend sessions already includes: “Earth-Kind Sustainable Landscaping” with Brad Voss; “Meetings with Remarkable Seeds and the Amazing People Who Nurture Them” with Adam Alexander; “Satisfying Your Plant Lust” with Jana Milbocker; and “Plant Blindness” with Marc Frank.

It's Your Turn As Master Gardeners, we are to be “dedicated to horticulture education, service, and lifelong learning. Through university research-based horticulture training, [we] are equipped to address needs and opportunities in their community and throughout the state.” I attended my first IMGC in Kansas in 2023 at the urging of IMGC veteran and fellow MG Cindy B. Cindy was absolutely right, “the best of the best are here.”

| Inside this Issue | |
|--|----|
| New District Directors | 2 |
| Continuing Education for Fall. | 3 |
| WIMGA Grant Supports | |
| Public Demonstration Garden Improvements. . . 3 | |
| Spring Into Gardening | 4 |
| Sensational Sensory Gardens with Kids | 5 |
| Morel Mushrooms | 6 |
| Events/Plant Sales | 8 |
| Quick Morel Mushroom Identification Guide . . 11 | |
| Resources | 11 |

Join me and thousands of MG from around the world at the IMGC 2025. You will not be disappointed. For complete details and to register visit: imgc2025.com

Thank You.
Jeanne Mueller,
 WIMGA President

WELCOME New District Directors

WIMGA Board of Directors welcomes Steve Schultz and Janet Mangold to the Board. Steve has been elected to the role of Eastern District Director and Janet to the Northern District Director position.



Steve Schultz

Steve is a member of the Washington Co. Master Gardeners Association. He has been a certified MG for 17 years, contributing over 1,600 volunteer hours. He held many board positions with the Outagamie MG Association including president. Steve has created presentations on a number of horticultural topics including peonies (one of his passions). Other MG volunteer activities include participating in plant sales and gardening.

He has strong presentation and teaching skills along with volunteer management. Steve was Certified in Volunteer Administration (CVA) internationally.

Janet Mangold

Janet has been a member of the North Country Master Gardeners Association and a Master Gardener for 24 years with 350 volunteer hours. She was the president of NCMGV from 2016 to 2017.

She initiated and was responsible for creating the Monarch and Pollinator Sanctuary MAPS at the Teaching and Display Garden in the Spooner Ag Research Garden. She has been an HR Executive for 33 years and is a SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management) Certified Professional.



WELCOME STEVE & JANET!!

Currently, two Directors are needed to fill board positions for the Central District. If interested or you know of someone who would be a good candidate, contact Jeanne Mueller, president at jl_mueller@icloud.com.

Continuing Education Calendar

*All events will be on Zoom and tentatively scheduled for 6:30pm
Events will be recorded for later viewing upon permission of the speaker.*

Tentative Fall Calendar for 2025

Wednesday, September 17

Bevin Cohen: Seed Saving & Sharing

Monday, October 6

Cathy Kavassalis: Roots of Resilience

Transforming Gardens to Protect Our Planet

WIMGA Grant Reports

Roseann Meixelsperger, WIMGA Treasurer & Finance Committee Chair

A benefit of WIMGA membership is our Educational Grants. Grant Funding budgeted for the 2025 year is \$8,850. Applications for each of the three levels of funding are due by **October 1**. Application forms and WIMGA Educational Grant Criteria are on the WIMGA website under the [Grants tab](#). Each association that receives a grant will be responsible for submitting a written report about how the grant was used. The progress report must be submitted to the WIMGA Treasurer by **July 31** of the following year. Please email your grant application(s) to treasurer.wimga@gmail.com. The following articles are a sample of grants funded in the last year:

WIMGA Grant Supports Public Demonstration Garden Improvements

Linda Grilley, North Central Wisconsin MGA \$250)

Have you ever been to a botanical garden and wished you could find out more about the plants? One such unique space has been developed by the North Central Wisconsin Master Gardeners in collaboration with Monk Botanical Gardens. With the support of WIMGA, we have improved a visitor's ability to get a listing of the plants and horticultural information in this Master Gardener Shade & Hosta Garden.

This special space started out as a jungle of invasive species with weak red pines growing on flat, primarily clay soil. You could not walk two feet into the area without clearing your



way. Master Gardeners worked to remove the invasives, add in berms with improved soil and winding paths. Sitting spaces were created and educational signs were installed. Planting of over 115 varieties of hostas, other perennials, over 18 trees and multiple shrubs have occurred. This year, WIMGA supported adding in new hosta cultivars and other perennials, including natives to this unique demonstration garden that is open to the public year-round. All hosta cultivars in the Garden are registered with the American Hosta Society.

QR codes are quickly becoming a doorway to information. Yet, we realized that many of the 64,000 visitors to the Garden were unfamiliar or uncomfortable with using the sign's QR code. To address this problem, we used WIMGA funding to create laminated information sheets that spelled out step by step instructions for QR code use.

The new information sheets are now available for people as they explore the Garden. The sheets are easily accessible in a waterproof container at the entrance to the Garden. The QR code leads to a listing of the plants in the Master Gardeners Shade and Hosta Garden located on the Monk Botanical Gardens' website. This website includes horticultural information on each plant.

Master Gardeners and others were helped to learn QR code use. Now visitors can be assisted when volunteers are present. When Master Gardeners are not present, the laminated information sheets provide useful self-instruction.

Master Gardeners are committed to educating the public on horticultural information about plants and the environment. WIMGA funds provided us with funding to further educate ourselves and the public. WIMGA funding also improved the horticultural diversity of this beautiful, botanical demonstration garden.

Spring Into Gardening

Jayne Herring, Racine-Kenosha MG

More than 80 interested gardeners from southeastern Wisconsin registered for the March 2025 Spring Into Gardening educational event at the Kenosha County Center. The event is cohosted by the Extension and Racine Kenosha Master Gardener Association (RKMGA) and supported in part with grants from WIMGA and the Potpourri Garden Club.

This year's topics reflected current concerns expressed by RKMGA members. Continuing to garden despite aging and how to take climate change into account while planning and executing a garden. The post-event survey indicated the information delivered was just what they were looking for.

The event featured morning and afternoon keynote presentations to all participants. The morning session, "Simplify to Keep on Growing" was delivered by Janet Macunovich, author, educator and garden designer. She offered a simple formula to help us calculate how much garden and what type of plantings could be maintained for "X" amount of time per month. She also offered examples of how high-maintenance plantings could be switched out for those less burdensome for gardeners who can no longer maintain at the higher level.



The morning sessions continued with two breakouts. One featuring Janet, "Cutting back the Rambunctious Garden", which focused on pruning and removal of plants that spread overmuch. The other breakout session was delivered by Mackenzie Manicki of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. She addressed, "Weeding Out Invasive Plants".

The afternoon keynote was delivered by Jeff Epping of Jeff Epping Design & Consulting, LLC and the former Horticulture Director of Olbrich Gardens in Madison. He addressed “Alternatives to Lawns”, which included ground cover alternatives and garden designs depending on the surroundings.

Afternoon breakout sessions completed the event. “Climate Change and How it Will Affect the Home Gardener” was delivered by Bridgett Mason, Assistant State Climatologist and Vijai Pandian, Horticulture Educator for Racine and Kenosha Counties. Mason shared climate data and trends (temperature and precipitation) including regional information. Pandian followed with what that might mean for regional gardeners, along with some tips for addressing these issues. Samara Eisner, Horticulturist at Olbrich Gardens, presented “Container Gardening for Patios and Balconies. She covered not only plant selection options and design, but also containers to use and care options.



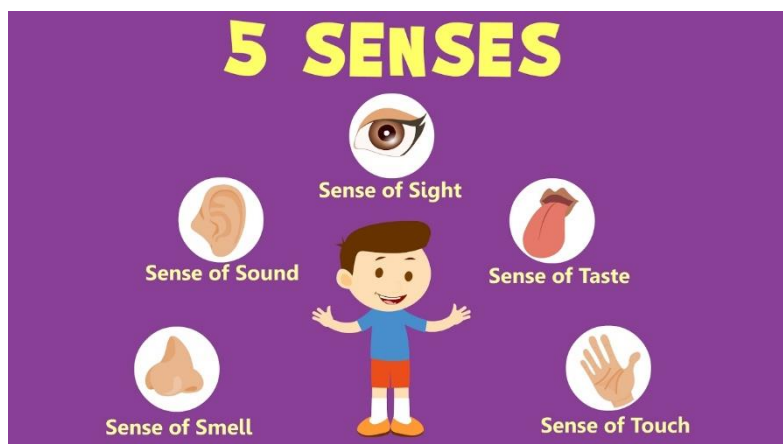
Sensational Sensory Gardens with Kids

Submitted by Jay Klavetter, Outagamie MG

What is a sensory garden? A sensory garden incorporates various elements that appeal to the five senses: sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell. It typically includes a variety of plants, textures, colors, and materials that encourage exploration. For children, these gardens serve as a hands-on learning environment where curiosity is nurtured, and creativity flourishes through play.

Sensory gardens are invaluable resources for children, offering a multi-faceted approach to learning through play. By engaging with nature, children not only enhance their sensory experiences but also develop critical life skills. Creating a sensory garden can be a rewarding project for educators and parents, fostering a love for the environment and a deeper understanding of the world around them.

Sensory gardens feature a variety of plants and elements that appeal to the different



senses. Here are some common plants used in these gardens:

Sight - Colorful flowers like marigolds, zinnias, and petunias and so many others provide vibrant colors. Pollinator plants like coneflowers and milkweed attract butterflies and bees, providing a lively atmosphere to watch and learn from.

Touch - Textured plants like lamb's ear (with its soft, fuzzy leaves) and ornamental grasses (that sway in the wind) provide interesting textures. Succulent varieties like aloe and jade plants have unique shapes and textures that are fun to explore.

Sound - Bamboos rustling can create soothing sounds in the garden. Wind chimes, although not plants, incorporated among plants enhance the auditory experience. A small water element can also provide an interesting sound to a great sensory garden.

Smell - Herbs like lavender, mint, and rosemary offer delightful scents and can be used in cooking. Fragrant flowers like jasmine and gardenias provide intoxicating fragrances that are especially appealing.

Taste - Edible plants like strawberries, cherry tomatoes, and bell peppers allow children to taste fresh produce straight from the garden. Different herbs like basil, parsley, and thyme not only smell great but also enhance culinary experiences using taste.



By incorporating a mix of these plants, sensory gardens can create a rich and engaging environment that stimulates all the senses, encouraging exploration and learning with children and so many others.

Morel Mushrooms

Article by: Donna Mae Stohlmann, St Croix Valley MG

TRUE OR FALSE?

1. Morel mushrooms are found everywhere in early spring.
2. Morels are easy to identify.
3. All mushrooms are edible.
4. Morels are easy to grow.

Morel Mushrooms are foraged from late March to Mid-May in Wisconsin. The warmer spring is to comparable averages the closer to March you will forage them. The cooler the spring is to comparable averages the closer to May you will forage them.



There are numerous conditions you should look for to determine when to forage morel mushrooms in Wisconsin:

- The amount of rain. The more rain, the sooner you can forage them.
- Temperature. Both the air temperature and soil temperature. The temperature needs to be above 50 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Soil Conditions. The wetter the soil the more likely you will be able to find morel mushrooms.

Black Morels are incredibly difficult to find due to their blending in with nature. Gray and White Morel mushrooms stand out more in nature and are of more abundance. Morels only grow in certain areas:

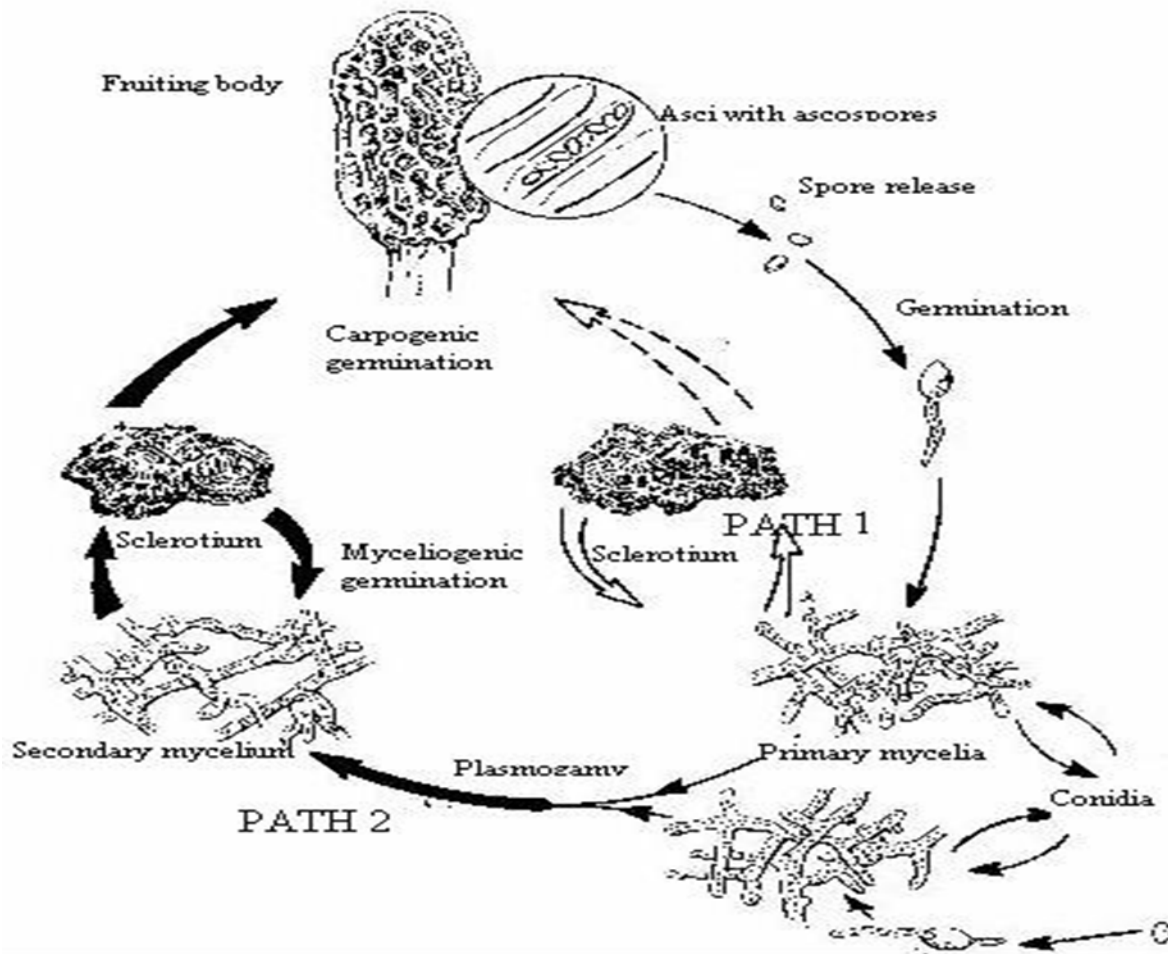
- Morels live in and on the edge of forested areas. They often grow around dead or dying trees. They prefer well-drained, sandy soils, and often grow on south-facing slopes. Look in the woods for partially shaded, woody soil.
- By aspen, ash, tulip, elm trees, and in areas of forest fires.
- In yards, gardens, woods, and even in designated areas in parks
- Usually after the first rain of spring

Never rely on cap shape alone to identify *Morchella* species. Cut mushrooms lengthwise to observe the inside, the species are hollow, and their stem attachment is attached directly to the stem.

The morel, one of the most prized and most delicious mushrooms, has finally been cultivated. The morel is the best known of the edible fungi since it is easily identified. For only thirty-one calories per one hundred grams, morel mushrooms offer more than half of the daily recommended values for copper and iron. They provide good amounts of vitamin D, B vitamins, manganese, zinc, and phosphorus.

The morel has defied all attempts at consistent indoor cultivation until very recently. It is the lack of knowledge of the morel, which has generated the excitement of the patenting of a process to grow morels (*Morchella* sp.) under controlled conditions (U.S. Patent nos. 4,594,809 and 4,757,640).

The life cycle of the morel:



This representation of the morel life cycle (Volk and Leonard 1990, Volk, and Leonard, 1989a).

A glance at the figure will reveal a stage of the morel life cycle that is not present in the other cultivated mushrooms: the sclerotium. The sclerotium of the morel is a large structure (1mm -5 cm diameter) composed of large cells with very thick walls that allow the fungus to survive adverse natural conditions, such as winter. In the spring, the sclerotium has two options for germination: to form a new mycelium or to form a fruiting body. It is amazingly easy to get the sclerotia to form a new mycelium but exceedingly difficult to force it to form a fruiting body. Specific conditions of nutrition, humidity, carbon dioxide levels and temperature must be met for primordia to form. The primordium is very prone to abort at this young stage if not given the proper set of conditions, which may be quite different from those that allowed their initiation.

Attempts have been made for many years to cultivate morels. There are scientific reports on success with growing morels from as early as 1883 (using such things as Jerusalem artichokes, apples, pumpkin, and various other substrates), and certainly there must have been attempts at cultivation long before that. Many people have had success with fruiting morels in their backyards by simply throwing out the wash water from collected morels into their compost piles, their lawn, or under some volunteer elm saplings growing up against the house.

Despite some scattered reports of outdoor cultivation, attempts to control fruiting indoors met with only scattered success until Ronald Ower of San Francisco succeeded in regularly cultivating morels, publishing his results in 1982. The methods he described in his paper were quite vague. Ower had difficulty convincing any established mushroom company that he had a process that worked and the company would be able to make a profit. At this point the Neogen company of East Lansing, Michigan became interested in the process. Neogen is affiliated with Michigan State University and was already the holder of several biotechnology patents. Neogen was able to convince Ower to come to East Lansing to develop a commercial process for growing morels. In April of 1986, U.S. Patent no. 4,594,809 was issued. Tragically, Ron Ower did not live to see the patent granted; he had been murdered a few weeks before in San Francisco.

*Thomas J. Volk, Dept. of Biology, University of Wisconsin- La Crosse
La Crosse WI volk.thom@uwlax.edu*

If you need something fun to do, check out [The Muscoda Morel-Fest](#), May 16-17, 2025. For a full schedule of activities and events check out their website.

(Go to page 11 for a Quick Morel Mushroom Identification Guide)

2025 Events/Plant Sales

[Wood County Master Gardeners Annual Spring Plant Sale](#)

Saturday, **May 17** from 8:00 am-4:00 pm
930 Westport Dr, Port Edwards, WI.

Annual and vegetable starter plants; perennials, including native; succulents; houseplants; perennial seeds; Garden Treasures for sale. Our sale is during the Port Edwards Community Rummage Sale, so check out bargains all over town!



Portage County Master Gardeners Annual Spring Plant Sale

Saturday, May 17, 2025 – 10:30 am-2:00 pm

Courthouse Annex Parking Lot

1462 Strongs Avenue, Stevens Point

From our Garden to yours . . . grasses, perennials, herbs, vegetables

Master Gardeners will be on hand to answer questions and help you choose wisely.



NORTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN
MASTER GARDENERS

Plant Sale

May 17, 2025
7:00 am - noon



Scan QR code for Facebook Event.

Locally grown plants from Master Gardeners' gardens include perennials, annuals, hostas, vegetables, tomatoes, natives and seedlings.

FREE Children's planting area

LOW Prices - Cash or check only

Visit our website - NCWMGA.ORG

Marathon Park Cattle Barn
1201 Stewart Ave., Wausau, WI

Event Sponsor 



North Central Wisconsin MG Plant Sale

May 17, 7:00 am-Noon

Locally grown plants from Master Gardeners' gardens include perennials, annuals, hostas, vegetables, tomatoes, natives, seedlings.

Also included: a flea market, a few specialty plants and limited house plants.

FREE Children's Planting Area

Ozaukee Master Gardeners Plant Sale

Saturday, May 17, 9:00 am-Noon

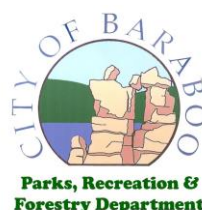
Ozaukee Co. Fairgrounds Expo Center
W67N890 Washington Ave, Cedarburg, WI



TERRIFIC TOMATO PLANT SALE & CLASS

Saturday, May 17, 2025, 10 am - 12 pm

Baraboo Civic Center 124 2nd St., Rm. 12 – 14 Baraboo, WI



Tomato Plant Sale – a variety of plants grown from seed by SCMGA

Free Workshop – “Growing Terrific Tomatoes in Wisconsin”

19th Annual St Croix Valley MGA Plant Sale



Saturday, June 7, 9:00 am–1:00 pm
rain or shine

Come early for the best choice!
The [historic Octagon House](#) is again
hosting the sale on its lawn at
1004 Third St in Hudson, WI

Master Gardeners donate all sale
items. Gently used gardening related
items will be available for purchase
and Master Gardeners will answer
your gardening questions.

Sale proceeds support grants awarded by SCVMGA for horticulture projects
of local community organizations.

23rd Annual North Central Wisconsin Master Gardeners

Garden Walk 2025

Five Gardens on the Southeast side of Wausau

Beginning May 1st
Tickets will be available
at:
UW Extension Office,
Wausau and
Clearview Garden
Center, Weston

Tickets \$10



Friday, July 25, 1:00-7:00 pm and Saturday, July 26, 9:00 am-3:00 pm

Door County Master Gardeners Plant Sale



Annual plant sale is a two-day event on Memorial Day
weekend. The Door County Master Gardeners 2025 Plant Sale
fundraiser will be held on Friday, May 23 and Saturday, May 24
at the Peninsular Agricultural Research Station. Check out the
link for the schedule, details of the sale and plant lists.

Send your association events to news@wimga.org for publication
in the newsletter and on our website.

Quick Morel Mushroom Identification Guide

How Well Do You Know Your Morels?

True Morel

Cap:

- More uniformly shaped
- Pitted inwards
- Covered in pits and ridges
- Attached directly to stem**

Interior:

- If you slice it in half, a true morel will be hollow from the tip of the cap to the bottom of the stem.



False Morel

Cap:

- Irregular, “squashed” shape
- Bulging outwards
- More wavy and lobed
- Hangs freely off the stem

Interior:

- If you slice it in half, a false morel will not be hollow, but filled with cotton-like, white fibers inside.



**There are species known as “half-free morels”, where only the bottom of the cap hangs freely from the stem. These can be harder to identify so discard if you have any doubts. Always practice your mushroom identification skills with an expert. Never let the Internet be the final word!

www.mushroom-appreciation.com



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Additional Resources from the Extension Horticulture Program:

Ask the Experts:

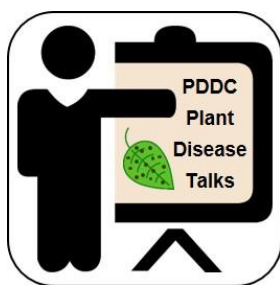
[A Monthly Garden and Landscape Q&A Series](#)

Sponsored by the UW-Madison
Division of Extension Horticulture Program

Join our monthly online programs in 2025 for an opportunity to connect with plant health experts from the UW-Madison Division of Extension. Each session, held on Mondays at 1:30 p.m., is your chance to ask questions about your trees and shrubs, garden vegetables and ornamentals, and lawn.

Whether it's about plant diseases, pesky insects, or the selection and general care of plants in and around your home, our panel of seasoned experts will provide you with insightful answers. Don't miss out on this opportunity to cultivate your knowledge and keep your plants thriving.

These online sessions are free, but registration is required for each session you would like to attend. Upon registration you will receive an email confirmation with the link for joining the session.



2025 PDDC Plant Disease Talks

Each month in 2025, the UW Plant Disease Diagnostics Clinic sponsors a Zoom presentation on a plant disease-related topic.

Check out descriptions and a preview of the talks and register for one or more of the talks, [CLICK HERE](#).

The Science (and Art) of Plant Disease Diagnosis

May 28, 2025, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Learn about the fascinating and complex process involved in identifying plant diseases. Learn about how to visually assess for plant disease symptoms, as well as about the range of lab tests that are often needed to confirm the identity of plant diseases.



Vegetable Diseases

June 25, 2025, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Learn about common diseases that can adversely affect the plants in your home vegetable garden. This presentation will include information on how to identify these diseases, as well as information on how to manage them.



[Ask Your Gardening Question](#)

This site is monitored by Wisconsin Master Gardeners.

Looking for expert advice on lawn, landscape or gardening issues? Fill out a form and attach photos showing your garden concern. A Wisconsin Extension Master Gardener or Extension staff will respond to your inquiry.

Amorphophallus Konjac

Donna Mae Stohlmann, St Croix Valley MG



On a sunny winter day, I went to the Marjorie McNeely Conservatory (Como Park, in St. Paul, MN) to see a stinky flower, Amorphophallus Konjac. Its common name is “Devil’s Tongue” or “Voodoo Lily.” This bright burgundy flower gives off the alluring scent of rot like a dead mouse. It is irresistible to its pollinators like flies seeking to lay eggs on a fresh carcass. It is like the Corpse Flower, but not as smelly, but it was smelly!!

Amorphophallus is a large genus of two hundred tropical and subtropical tuberous herbaceous plants from the arum family, native to Asia, Africa, Australia, and various oceanic islands. Few species are edible noted for “famine” foods after careful preparations to remove irritating chemicals. I took my photos and talked more with the volunteers and then parted to go to the sunken gardens for more beautiful flowers and a better smell.



Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association (WIMGA)

Serving its members since 1992

May 2025 Newsletter

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

The Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association Newsletter is published six (6) times a year (January, March, May, July, September and November). Articles, artwork and ideas are welcome, final selection and editing are the responsibility of the editorial staff. The opinions reflected in this publication are expressions from individual master gardeners or associations and not necessarily the viewpoint of the UW-Madison Department of Horticulture, Division of Extension Master Gardener Program Office.

Wisconsin Master Gardener Association Team:

President, Jeanne Mueller wimga.president@gmail.com
Vice President, Beth Howman-Combs wimga.vp@gmail.com
Secretary, Diane Kachel wimga.secretary@gmail.com
Treasurer, Roseann Meixelsperger treasurer.wimga@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor, Hali Dessecker news@wimga.org

Master Gardener Program – Div of Ext <https://mastergardener.extension.wisc.edu/>
email: wimastergardener@extension.wisc.edu

The Wisconsin Extension Master Gardener Program supports a network of individuals dedicated to horticulture education, service, and lifelong learning. Through unbiased university research-based horticulture training they are equipped to address needs and opportunities in their community and throughout the state. An EEO/AA employer, University of Wisconsin-Madison provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title VI, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act requirements.