



Winnebago County Master Gardeners Newsletter

April 2021

Mission Statement

Our purpose is to provide horticultural education, community service and environmental stewardship for our community in affiliation with the University of Wisconsin Extension Program.

"APRIL
SHOWERS
BRING MAY
FLOWERS"



Submitted by Kathy Schultz for

Plant Competition

What am I?

By Jane Kuhn

I am an herbaceous, clump forming perennial that grows in a mound 9-12 inches tall and 1-2 feet wide in zones 3-8. My foliage consists of small, shallowly cut, dark green basal leaves and thinner, more deeply cut stem leaves. Solitary flowers with a 1-1 ½ inch diameter, feature five unnotched magenta to purple crimson petals with darker veins. Flowers primarily bloom in May and June with a sparse rebloom occurring throughout the summer. After the first fall frost, foliage usually turns attractive shades of red. I need a medium amount of water, well-drained soil, and full sun to part shade and am low maintenance.

Propagation occurs by division in spring or fall, tip cuttings or seed. I am ideal for slopes, rock gardens, woodland edges, borders, ground covers, and containers. I attract butterflies and bees and tolerate deer, rabbits and clay soil. I have no serious insect or disease problems but have some susceptibility to leaf spots and rusts. I am long lived and drought tolerant once established.

WCMGA Contacts

Check your membership guide for contact information.

Co-Presidents: Ed Dombrowski & Bob Kneepkens

Vice President: Kathy Procknow & Debra Butch

Secretary: Anne Murphy

Treasurer: Deby Voyles

Advisor: Kimberly Miller

Newsletter Compilation: Anne Murphy



We would love your help! If you are interested in contributing in a future newsletter by writing an article, submitting a photo, or sharing a story, please let me know by the 15th of each month by emailing pakster0605@yahoo.com. Each article submitted will count toward your volunteer hours. Thank you!



Thank you Kim Willman!

Kim has stepped up to help out with the newsletter proofing content, etc. Thank you to the others who volunteered as well and just remember that you can submit articles for submission any month and get volunteer hours for your time!

Letter from your Presidents: Ed Dombrowski & Bob Kneepkens

Dear Winnebago Master Gardener Members,

Spring is here!! However, at the time of this writing it is March 16, 2021 and there is newly fallen snow on the ground. The official start of spring is in four days. It seems winter was longer this year due to social distancing,

“Patience is necessary, and one cannot reap immediately where one has sown.”

-Soren Kierkegaard

avoiding large gatherings and only meeting with friends and families through phone calls or Zoom. As gardeners we have learned patience. Patience is not only the ability to wait, but also the ability to keep a good attitude. This certainly applies to gardening and other situations in life.

We think Spring 2021 is a little more special. We are leaving winter behind and the pandemic is getting under control. There seems to be more seed catalogs we are receiving, compared to previous years.

At the business meeting, we were excited to learn the education committee is working on the Winter Escape / Summer Dreams event for 2022.

The opportunity for volunteering is just around the corner and we are waiting for guidance from Extension about any necessary pandemic precautions. Project leads are presenting information about each of their projects at the upcoming Association Meetings. This gives each member a chance to review the projects, ask questions and hopefully volunteer to help.

There are many continuing education opportunities available online. We encourage everyone to take advantage of these. After March 31 there will be some important information coming from Extension. All Extension Master Gardeners will receive access to complete an online orientation/onboarding training. It is strongly encouraged that you complete the training. For doing so, you can claim 10 hours of continuing education..

At the last business meeting there was a recorded presentation by Dr. Laura Jull titled “Selecting Quality Trees: Don’t get caught with your plants down.” An hour of that two-hour video was played. If you would like to view that video in its entirety or other presentations from the WDNR and UW-Madison, Division of Extension Fall 2020 Urban Forestry Workshop access the link below.

<https://forestrynews.blogs.govdelivery.com/2021/03/11/fall-workshop-series-now-available-on-video/>

Best Wishes,

Bob and Ed

Starting Seeds Indoors

By Lawanda Jungwirth

Our Wisconsin growing season is too short for some vegetables to ripen or flowers to bloom if you wait to plant their seeds outdoors in May. Now is the time to start seeds of plants like tomatoes, peppers and annual flowers indoors.

Use a sterile soilless seed starting mix and a container that drains well. There are several options in stores next to the seed starting mixes, or use egg cartons, yogurt cartons or plastic cups with holes punched in the bottom.

Fill the container with seed starting mix to a ½ inch from the top and wet the mix thoroughly. Spread the seed over the mix evenly, or place one or two seeds in each compartment of a divided container. Cover the seeds lightly with more soilless mix to the depth suggested on the seed packet or use a toothpick or pencil to push the seeds to the proper depth. Press the mix firmly onto the seeds and water gently without disturbing the seeds. Use a fine spray or gently tip water off a small spoon onto the planting mix.

Cover the container with plastic. Purchased planting containers often come with clear plastic covers, but if you are using a homemade container, just slip it inside a clear plastic bag.

Place the container in a warm, bright place and keep it covered until the seeds germinate. Then remove the cover and water as needed to keep the soil moist. Turn the container once a day so the seedlings grow straight.

Seedlings first develop cotyledons, which look like leaves but are really food storage cells. Next, a set of true leaves forms. Now the seedlings should be transplanted to a larger container, either another flat with wider spacing or individual containers filled with moist potting soil. Carefully lift the seedlings with a spoon or fork. Handle seedlings by their leaves rather than their stems - if the stem is crushed the seedling will die, but it can always grow a new leaf.

Use a pencil to make a small hole in the potting soil of the new container and place the seedling slightly deeper than it was growing in the seed flat. Gently press the soil around the roots and water well.

Transplants often droop or wilt but recover quickly if properly cared for. Keep them in good light, but not full sun, for several days and keep the soil moist.

Transplant the seedlings to the garden in mid-May. Before they go out, harden them off by placing the containers in a shady protected area for several hours each day, gradually moving them to the sun for short periods of time. Bring them indoors at night. Increase the length of time they stay in the sun each day for a couple weeks. Watch them closely to make sure they don't dry out.

Choose a cloudy day to plant them out, or do so in the evening. Cover them with upended berry baskets, milk jugs, or floating row covers to keep them out of intense sun for a few days.

Answer to What am I?

By Jane Kuhn

I am *Geranium sanguineum* Max Frei. Order: Geraniales. Family: Geraniaceae – Geraneum family. Genus: *Geranium* L – geranium. Species: *Geranium sanguineum* L – bloody geranium. Common names: bloody cranesbill or bloodred geranium. Genus name comes from the Greek word *geranos* meaning crane in reference to the fruit which is said to resemble the head and beak of a crane. The specific epithet comes from the Latin word *sanguineus* meaning blood red in reference to the flower color and red autumn leaves of the straight species. I can be found in the rain garden adjacent to the Coughlin Center.



References: USDA Plants Database and associated links.

Project Leads Needed!

Carter Memorial Library, Omro

As lead/co-lead, you will work with the library director and a dedicated team of Master Gardener volunteers to plan the gardens, do spring clean-up, plant and maintain the gardens.

Park View Prairie Garden

We have one person who is willing to co-lead this project and are seeking another Master Gardener volunteer to assist. The Park View Prairie Garden has been in existence since 1984. Master Gardeners work by identifying plants, removing invasive species and maintaining the Prairie with spring and fall cleanups.

Ideally, we would like to have these positions filled by the end of March/early April so that any necessary communication with the partners may be made in a timely manner.

Please let Kathy Procknow (keprocknow55@gmail.com) or Deb Butch (debbybutch@gmail.com) know if you are interested in helping as lead/co-lead for either of these projects.

Plant Competition Winners
Thank you everyone for submitting your entries!



1st place Non-Flowering, Julie Gutsmedl



1st place Flowering, Julie Gutsmedl



1st place Chia, Ed Dombrowski



1st place Succulent, Julie Gutsmedl

Ask Extension: Will perennials grow well in raised beds?

March 11, 2021, by Julie Weisenhorn, MN Extension educator, horticulture

I recently moved to a home with heavy clay soil that does not drain well. I'm thinking my best course of action might be to build some raised beds filled with better draining soil, rather than trying to make the existing soil more hospitable to plants.

If I want to plant perennials in these raised beds, how high and wide would I need to make them in order for plants to overwinter well? Which plants will perform well in clay soil that does not drain well? I'm also hoping I can plant directly in the ground instead of in a raised bed.



You can build raised beds, but you are right to question how well perennial shrubs like hydrangeas will do in winter being that their roots are above ground.

Soil in raised beds can freeze quickly, stressing the plant roots, while plants in the ground are subject to more gradual freezing. This allows the plants to gradually move into dormancy for winter. Raised beds are great for annual flowers and vegetables.

Choosing plants that grow well in your current site conditions is the key to a healthy and long-lived landscape that looks great. Start by submitting a soil sample to the UMN Soil Test Lab, so you know as much as possible about your soil and get some recommendations on amending it.



Before planting, amend your soil. It is easier to do this before putting plants in the ground than afterward. For heavy clay soil, compost will likely be recommended to add air and improve drainage. Both air and drainage help create a good growing environment for plant roots.

You can purchase bagged compost or bulk compost. Use a tiller or at least a garden fork and work the compost into the existing soil by digging and turning the soil, breaking up the clumps as they emerge.

Member Business Meeting Minutes - March 9, 2021

Meeting started: 6:03 p.m.

Treasurer's Report: Total all accounts: \$33809.97 Money Market: \$29,933

Secretary's Report: No Report

Project Updates:

- Project Lead meeting was held in February 2021
- Leads need to get approval checklist submitted, before work can start
- Sullivan's Woods, farmers markets, are not approved projects this year
- A virtual recruitment will be conducted next month
- Omro Library needs a project lead

Extension Update:

- Complete annual enrollment by March 31
- April 1; only those annual enrolled volunteers will be assigned a NET ID which allows access to the CANVAS learning platform

Education Committee Update:

- Working on a tree program for September
- Work is being done on Winter Escape / Summer Dreams (WESD) for 2022
- Anyone wishing to be an Education Committee member contact Mary Moosemiller
- Master gardener Appreciation Week April 4-9-2021 with MG Appreciation Day on 4-7-2021

State Report: None

Indoor Plant Contest

Non Flowering plants- 1-Julie Gutsmeidl,2-Jennifer Breining, 3-Linda Christianson

Succulents: 1-Julie Gutsmeidl, 2-Gerald Schaefer, 3- Anne Murphy

Flowering: 1-Julie Gutsmeidl, 2-Anne Murphy, 3-Linda Baeten

Chia- 1-Ed Dombrowski

Breakout Session ideas:

The following is a brief summary of ideas for pre-business meeting continuing education topics. Flowers, upbeat items, new trends, vegetables, garden issues, herbs, pollinators, heirlooms, raised gardens, green houses, prairie gardens, climate change, weed management, No Mow May, rain gardens, indigenous gardens, natives, maintaining a garden, starting a vegetable garden, meeting with WI state agents, perennials, habitat food sources, container gardens, milk bottle gardening, potatoes, botanical gardens, monarchs, bonsai's, bugs, getting garden ready for summer, Japanese beetles, butterflies, jumping worms, bees in the city, ticks and cover crops

Monarch Migration:

- 99% have left the confines of Mexico
- Population down about 30%
- Problems: left U.S. northern U.S. in good shape, drought in south, tree degradation
- Reduced food/shelter opportunities

Poll:

What is your plan for volunteering for 2021? 70+ members responded that they intend to volunteer

Video:

From Urban Forestry Workshop. Topic: Selecting Quality Trees: Don't get caught with your plants down," Presenter: Dr. Laura Jull (continuing education 1 hour)

Next Meeting: April 13, 2020 at 6:00 PM

Upcoming Events - See Calendar for April Events

Continuing Education Opportunities

Linda Werner

Those listed on the WCMGA website and Facebook page are approved for MG continuing education credit.

Xerces Society (All free) <https://xerces.org/events/webinars>

Thursday, April 1, noon-1:30 p.m. CST, Soil Invertebrates-Getting to Know the Life in Soil

Thursday, April 15, noon-1:30 p.m. CST, Getting to Know the "Good Bugs"- Scouting for Pollinators and Other Beneficial Insects

Thursday, May 6, noon-1:30 p.m. CST, Supporting Pollinators Over Time: How to Maintain Wildlife Diversity

UW Arboretum, (\$10 each)

<https://arboretum.wisc.edu/learn/adult-education/winter-enrichment/>

Thursday, April 8, 10 a.m. CST, Climate Change, Reality vs. Development: Global South and Worldwide Perspective

“Learning never exhausts the mind.”

-Leonardo da Vinci

Dampening Damping-Off: Tips on Seed Starting to Avoid Disease

MARCH 1, 2021 DDLANG

After a long, cold winter, it's time to start growing plants from seeds for the upcoming growing season. Damping-off is a common disease that can prevent seed-starting success. Here are tips that can help prevent damping-off from being a problem.



Damping Off

Buy high quality seed from a reputable source. High quality seeds are less likely to carry damping-off organisms.

Use pasteurized soil. Pasteurized soil has been steam treated to kill pathogens.

Use clean pots/containers. Store new pots or flats in sealed plastic bags to prevent possible pathogen contamination prior to use. When reusing pots, soak them in 10% bleach (1 part of a disinfecting bleach, 9 parts water) for 30 minutes, then rinse well to remove bleach residues.

Plant seeds at the proper depth. This will promote quick germination and rapid growth of seedlings out of the early stages of growth when they are most susceptible to damping-off.

Start seeds at higher temperatures. This will again help plants grow out of their susceptible phase quickly. Consider using a seed-starting heat pad (available at your local garden center), particularly if you start seeds in a colder part of your home (e.g., a basement).

Don't overwater! Damping-off organisms are more active in wet soils. Water enough to keep seedlings alive, but keep plants a bit on the dry side to slow development of damping-off pathogens.

Seed starting can be a fun way to start the gardening season. With just a little extra effort, you can prevent damping-off from dampening your gardening efforts.

For more information on damping-off and its management, check out University of Wisconsin Garden Facts XHT1124 (Damping-Off), available at <https://pddc.wisc.edu/fact-sheet-listing-all/> or <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/damping/>.

WCMGA Projects

Check your Member Guide for contact information.

Project	Project Lead(s)
Algoma Town Hall	Petey Clark
Butterfly Garden Miravida Living Oshkosh	Jane Kuhn
Carter Memorial Library, Omro	Pat Behm/Linda Petek
Octagon House, Neenah	Jerry Robak
Invasive Species	Valerie Stabenow
Morgan House	Kathy Schultz
Neenah Public Library	Tamara Erickson
Oshkosh Area Humane Society	Julie Miller/Matt Miller
Paine Gardens & Arboretum	Virginia Slattery
Park View Cutting Garden	Donna Kudlas/Jane Kuhn
Park View Prairie Garden	Looking for a new Lead!
Park View Flower Arranging	Lil Hansche
Park View Vegetable Garden	Tom Weber
Farmer's Market	Synda Jones/Patty Schmitz
Plant Health Advisors	Mary Shepard
Shattuck Park, Neenah	Diane Iott
Sullivan's Woods	Linda Loker

Project Leads: If you'd like your meetings listed on the calendar, please email information to Anne Murphy pakster0605@yahoo.com.

April 2021

Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
				1	2	3
4  	5	6 Board Mtg. 6 PM	7	8	9	10
11	12	13 Business Mtg. 6 PM	14	15	16	17  2nd place Succulent, Gerald Schaefer
18  3rd place Succulent, Anne Murphy	19	20  3rd place Non Flowering, Linda Christianson	21	22  2nd place Flowering, Anne Murphy	23	24  2nd place Non flowering Jennifer Breining
25	26	27	28	29	30	 3rd place Flowering, Linda Baeten

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