

Winnebago County Master Gardeners

Newsletter

August 2018

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.

*“Life’s a Garden.
DIG IT!”*



Picture by Linda Loker

What am I?

By Jane Kuhn

I am an herbaceous perennial and a native to northeastern North America in zones 3-7. I grow from 1-2 feet tall with multiple, light green or purple stems emerging from a taproot. My opposite leaves are up to 4 inches long and two inches across with my uppermost leaves often whorled. My purple flowers form in a cluster at the apex of my stem above the whorled leaves and bloom from late summer to early fall. I have one to one and a half inch flowers which are bottle-shaped, looking like oversized flower buds even when mature. I grow best in moist, rich, well-drained soil in part shade.

I am easier to start with potted plants rather than seed as germination can be erratic and seedling mortality can be high. If left undisturbed, plants in optimum growing conditions will naturalize over time into large clumps. I am best in rock gardens, woodland or shade gardens, wild flower gardens or native plant gardens. I have no serious insect or disease problems.

WCMGA Contacts

Check your membership guide for contact information.

Co-Presidents: Linda Loker & Kathy Schultz

Co-Vice Presidents: Nancy Karuhn & Eric Kropp

Secretary: Ann Abraham

Treasurer: Joni Pagel

Advisor: Kimberly Miller

Newsletter Compilation: Anne Murphy



Park View Prairie Garden

Letter from your Presidents: Linda Loker & Kathy Schultz

*"That August time it was delight
To watch the red moons wane to white." Algemon Charles Swinburne, English poet*

We hope each of you are enjoying this wonderful sunny summer! Mother nature finally started to shower us with a much needed natural rain once in a while! Lawns are perking up too!

We had 2 garden walks in June and July. Thank you **Petey Clark** and **Lil Hansche** for sharing your gardens with us. Both gardens were delightful and full of inspiration for us all!

Our August garden walk will be at one of our projects - the Butterfly Garden at Miravida Living (formerly Bethel Home). It will be held on Tuesday August 14 5-7 PM. See you there!

No business meeting in August but we will see our fellow board members on Tuesday, August 7.

Our projects are doing a great job, sprucing up and adding, maintaining, watering...the list is endless, but oh the results are so beautiful! Thank you all for your hard work and dedication in educating and helping the public understand our environment we live in!

Farmers Market has been in full swing and thank you to the jumping worm committee for joining the booth leaders each week to share the information with our community.

The MG bus trip to Door Co is full (56 attendees). Thank you to our Education Committee for organizing this and the very nice workshops done or in the planning stages.

By now you all should have seen an email about applying for a \$50 scholarship to go to the WI Master Gardener Association Conference September 21-22 in Eau Claire, WI. We hope you are maybe considering going to the conference this year and finding out what our MG friends are doing around our state. And if you are considering going, think about applying for this scholarship. It is a very worthwhile conference...and fun!

WCMGA Level 1 training will begin Tuesday, September 11. Training will be in the morning this year. There will be two orientation sessions - Wednesday, August 15 and Thursday, August 16, both from 10-11 AM, for anyone interested in becoming a master gardener in Winnebago Co. If you know someone who might be interested, please let them know about these meetings.

September will bring us back to our regular schedule so plan on joining us at the business meeting. We will host Patrick Lake, Soil Conservationist from National Resources Conservation Service. He will talk to us on soil health and no-till gardening.

September 1 is the deadline for our membership dues - \$30 will include state and local fees. Send your checks to **Linda Baeten**, as Linda coordinates the membership list from this. Thank you Linda!

September will also bring us to our favorite time of year - hours! This year your hours deadline will be on September 11, the day of our business meeting. Please make sure you have all of your hours documented and sent in by this date. And please let us know if you have any difficulty or questions before then, so that we can help you. And most importantly, a great big thank you for gathering all these hours for the sake of our community. Winnebago Co MGs rock!

See you in September!

Kathy and Linda

Ask a Plant Health Advisor

“Client is having issues with leaf damage on flowers. Damage is on all different types of foliage. Had the same issue last year but thought it would not come back this year. It has.”



Find the answer later in the newsletter.

Bee Balm Finds a Place in any Mid-Summer Landscape

By Lawanda Jungwirth



Bee balm is a pretty perennial lavender-colored flower native to Wisconsin prairies. It goes by a few other names including monarda, wild bergamot and Oswego tea. The Latin name is *Monarda fistulosa*. Another native bee balm, *Monarda didyma* boasts bright scarlet flowers.

Lavender bee balm flowers are about three inches across while the scarlet ones are larger, at four inches. The pom-pom shaped flower heads sit atop square, open-branched stems from two to five feet tall and bloom from June to August.

Along with prairie plantings, bee balm can find a home in the middle or back of any sunny perennial flower bed or border, herb garden, meadow, natural area or rain garden.

Horticulturists have developed several cultivated varieties of bee balm from the two natives in a range of colors and sizes. It is best to stick with the natives though, as they provide sustenance to hummingbirds, bees, butterflies and many other insects while the cultivated varieties may not.

Bee balm's toothed, four-inch leaves have a distinctive odor. It has been described as "oregano with hints of mint and thyme" but the scent is so unique that it really defies description. Bee balm's strong scent and taste make the plant deer resistant. It is also on the short list of plants that are able to thrive near black walnut trees.

Bee balm prospers in a wide range of soils including sandy, loamy or clayey, both dry and moist. Plants should be divided about every three years as the center of the plant dies out. The edges can then be divided and replanted. Division improves air circulation and plant vigor.

Deadhead bee balm flowers to keep plants looking tidy. When lower leaves start to yellow, cut stems to three or four inches and you may get a second fall bloom.

The main problem with bee balm is that it can develop a foliar disease called powdery mildew which looks like powdery white blotches on the leaves. Powdery mildew is generally just a cosmetic problem and won't kill the plant. It may become so severe that it causes premature leaf drop. Even then, unless it happens year after year, the plant will probably survive. Prevent powdery mildew by thinning the stems, choosing a site with good air circulation and avoiding overhead watering.

Both leaves and flowers of bee balm are edible. The most common use for the leaves is to make a refreshing citrusy tea. They can also be used whole or chopped in recipes with duck, pork, sausage and curries or tossed into a fruit salad. Bee balm flowers add color and taste to salads or iced teas.

To dry leaves for tea, strip the leaves from the stem and lay them on paper or screen for a few days in a warm, shady place. If they haven't dried in three days, place them in an oven on the lowest heat until completely dry, checking them every few minutes.

Master Gardener Project: Ascend

By Jane Kuhn



The WCMGA project with The Ascend Initiative has progressed through this summer in partnership with Foodwise and Ascend. It involved interactive cooking and container



gardening classes for young adults who have a mental health challenge as they transition from adolescence to an adulthood of self-sufficiency and stability. Our part of the project involved using container gardening as a means of gaining life skills such as working with others, being on time, following directions and decision making.



Each class consisted of a cooking lesson by Foodwise and a gardening lesson provided by WCMGA members and the Horticulture Educator. Containers were planted by apartment and grown for the good of everyone involved to encourage working together. By having the responsibility of



maintaining plants over the summer they also gained experience in taking care of something other than themselves.

The first container gardening lesson consisted of growing vegetables from seed. Participants chose from seeds for lettuce, spinach, radish, beets and cucumbers. Lesson two involved the planting and care of herbs such as basil, cilantro and mint. For the third lesson participants planted vegetables. They chose from a variety of pepper and tomato plants. By this class they were able to harvest vegetables they had



planted from seed and to make a salad. They now had 24 successful containers to harvest throughout the summer. Along with the planting, lessons included proper watering, staking plants and thinning plants.

This project will continue with a fourth class in late summer when the vegetables will be harvested and used by them to make salsa, success stories will be shared and a visioning activity will take place to determine future gardening activities. Ascend is adding on a kitchen to their current building as well as raised garden beds for next season, leaving the door wide open to future projects.

Help Defend Wisconsin's Waters on 8/18!

By Valeria Stabenow

Interested in citizen science and protecting Wisconsin's waters? We need your help to prevent the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species! You won't want to miss the 5th annual Statewide Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Snapshot Day hosted by River Alliance of Wisconsin in partnership with UW Extension's Citizen Lake Monitoring Network. On Saturday, August 18th join 200+ water enthusiasts and venture to streams or lakes near you on a search for invasive plants and animals that can choke out our waterways and harm vital habitat. Whether you want to wade in or stay dry, there is a site for you! Learn more and register today! <https://bit.ly/2K44PY3>

Member Meeting Minutes - No July meeting

Upcoming Events

Sept 1: Master Gardener Membership Dues

Sept. 10: 1:30 Flower Arranging - Park View

Sept. 11: Volunteer Hours Due

Sept. 4/11/18/25: Butterfly Garden, 9 AM

Sept. 4/11/18/25: Park View Cutting/Veg. Gardens, 12:30 PM

Sept. 18: Education Committee, Benvenuto's, 5:30 PM

Oct. 2/9/16/23/30: Butterfly Garden, 9 AM

Oct. 2/9/16/23/30: Park View Cutting/Veg. Gardens, 12:30 PM

Oct. 16: Education Committee, Benvenuto's, 5:30 PM

Nov. 12: 1:30 Flower Arranging - Park View

Nov. 20: Education Committee, Benvenuto's, 5:30 PM



Summer in the Butterfly Garden

By Jane Kuhn

Summer in the Butterfly Garden (on the Miravida Living campus just adjacent to and south of Bethel Home) has a new garden bed for everyone to enjoy. This new garden is the result of a joint effort by Miravida maintenance department and volunteers who removed the old stones and put in new soil and Master Gardeners who planned, planted, mulched and set up soaker hoses for the bed. The flowers planted here are natives which are plants indigenous (originated in Wisconsin) and have developed, occur naturally or existed for many years.

Native plants are the foundation that attracts and supports native birds, butterflies and pollinators in the garden. Further benefits of native plants include once they are established they seldom need watering or protection from frost and the deep roots of these plants hold soil and prevent erosion. Native plants are also used in rain gardens which are being developed in many communities including Oshkosh for the purpose of controlling urban stormwater runoff.

This new garden was planted several weeks ago and surprisingly several flowers are blooming. As you can see in the photo below, the liatris and red milkweed are showing their blooms and welcoming butterflies. Both of these are great attractors for monarch butterflies. We will be adding signs with the plant names in the near future.

We Master Gardeners continue to work in the garden each Tuesday beginning at 9:00 am and welcome everyone to visit then or other times. We have enjoyed the elders and staff who have been coming out and the conversations about their gardens are so enjoyable. The cherry tomatoes are also being enjoyed by elders and staff and are there for the picking (in pots at doors next to the building).

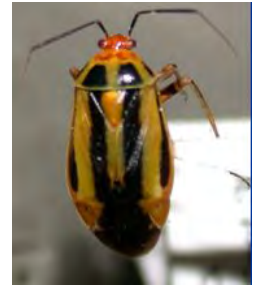
On Tuesday, August 14 from 5:00 to 7:00 pm we are having a garden walk for all Master Gardeners who would like to see our Butterfly Garden. We also invite all elders, staff, and family members to visit at that time and enjoy the garden as well as some treats with us.

Answer to Ask a Plant Health Advisor:

"This looks to be the damage of the "four-lined plant bug". This insect is really common in late spring and early summer and they commonly damage flowers (such as perennials) and herbs. There's one generation per year, so things start quieting down in July. A factsheet with additional information about this insect can be found here:

[https://hort.uwex.edu/articles/four-lined-plant-bug/.](https://hort.uwex.edu/articles/four-lined-plant-bug/)"

Patrick (PJ) Liesch, Director UW-Madison Insect Diagnostic Lab



Answer to What am I?

By Jane Kuhn



I am closed bottle gentian. Order: Gentianales. Family: Gentianaceae – Gentian family. Genus: *Gentiana* L – gentian. Species: *Gentiana andrewsii* Griseb – closed bottle gentian. Other names: bottle gentian, closed gentian, Andrew's gentian. The genus name honors King Gentius of Illyria, c.500 B.C., who was reputed to have discovered the medicinal virtues of the yellow gentian from which a tonic bitters is still made. The species name refers to the English botanical artist Henry C. Andrews (active 1794-1830). The closed bottle gentian is pollinated almost exclusively by bumble bees because they are one of the few insects strong enough to pry open the closed flowers. Populations of this plant are declining as a result of the destruction of wetlands. This plant can be seen in the rain garden located at the entrance to the Coughlin Center.

References: *USDA Plants Database and associated links.*

WCMGA Projects

Check your Member Guide for contact information.

Project	Project Lead
Butterfly Garden Miravida Living Oshkosh	Jane Kuhn
Carter Memorial Library, Omro	Pat Behm/Linda Petek
Octagon House, Neenah	Jerry Robak
Invasive Species	Sue Egner/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	Bill Weber
Park View Prairie Garden	Sally Lindo
Park View Flower Arranging	Lil Hansche
Park View Vegetable Garden	Tom Weber
Farmer's Market	Dorothy Gayhart-Kunz/Janet Priebe/ Synda Jones/Patty Schmitz
Plant Health Advisors	Patty Schmitz/Mary Shepard
Shattuck Park, Neenah	Julie Gutsmedl
Sullivan's Woods	Linda Loker

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

August 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7 Butterfly Garden 9 AM Park View Cutting/Veg. Gardens 12:30 PM Board Meeting 6:00 PM	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 Butterfly Garden 9 AM Park View Cutting/Veg. Gardens 12:30 PM Garden Walk Miravida Living's Butterfly Garden 5-7 PM	15	16	17	18 Aquatic Invasive Species Snapshot Day 8:30-1 PM
19	20	21 Butterfly Garden 9 AM Park View Cutting/Veg. Gardens 12:30 PM Education Committee Benvenuto's 5:30 PM	22	23	24	25
26	27	28 Butterfly Garden 9 AM Park View Cutting/Veg. Gardens 12:30 PM	29	30	31	

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