

## Winnebago County Master Gardeners

### Newsletter

August 2019

#### 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.

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***"Flowers don't tell,  
they show."***



*Orientpet Lily. Submitted by Valerie Stabenow.*

## What am I?

*By Jane Kuhn*

I am an herbaceous perennial and a native to eastern and central North America and Canada in zones 3-8. I am best grown in moist to wet, rich soil in full sun to part shade. My height ranges from two to four feet with a width from 1 ½ to 2 ½ feet. I bloom from August to October, adding fall interest to the garden with my pink tinged white flowers which are in a densely packed spike at the top of the main stem with smaller spikes below. My leaves are elongated and arranged opposite each other along the stem. I tolerate temporary flooding and I am a low maintenance plant.

Propagation is with seeds, stem cuttings, plants or division. The best time to seed is in spring. Plant division is best in spring in cold climates or early fall in warmer climates. I can be used in shade or woodland gardens, bog gardens, around pond or water gardens, wildflower or native plant gardens and rain gardens. My blooms are mostly pollinated by bumblebees as they have the size and strength to pry open the bloom and reach the nectar inside. I attract butterflies, birds and other pollinators and have no serious insect or disease problems.

## WCMGA Contacts

*Check your membership guide for contact information.*

**Co-Presidents:** Linda Loker & Kathy Schultz

**Vice President:** Britton Dake

**Secretary:** Susan Raasch

**Treasurer:** Joni Pagel

**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 or submitting a photo, please let me know by the 15th of each month by emailing [pakster0605@yahoo.com](mailto:pakster0605@yahoo.com). Thank you!

## Letter from your Presidents: Linda Loker & Kathy Schultz

"In August, the large masses of berries, which, when in flower, had attracted many wild bees, gradually assumed their bright velvety crimson hue, and by their weight again bent down and broke their tender limbs."

- Henry David Thoreau

August is the time of year that we truly enjoy our summer here in WI, right? We are experiencing the ever-changing blooms of summer - along with the lush beauty of nature around us, whether by taking walks, bike riding or kayaking/boating. It is also a time to re-think some of our decisions on where we have placed some of our horticulture treasures. As someone once said...a plant is only renting its space in our gardens! Plants sometimes become much bigger and bolder than anticipated, and have to be relocated. But after all is done, you look back and say, "Yes, this is where you belong!" Then we move on to the next victim!

July was a busy month - our bus trip to Madison was a success! Over 45 participants enjoyed Jeff Epping's tour of the EPIC gardens, Olbrich Garden and Centennial Garden on the university campus. Listening to comments from attendees was very positive.

Garden walk at member **Ruth Retzlaff**'s home also brought many who wandered her spacious gardens and pond. Maybe you will even see a picture of her new "she shed" as you read this newsletter! August garden walks include member **Debbie Quandt**'s garden on Tuesday, August 13, 5-7; and **Sharon Slover**'s garden on Thursday, August 22. Sharon joins MGs on many of our trips. Sharon's address is 6282 Bradley Ave in Pickett. An email reminder will be sent out in August on both.

Projects are really taking shape and everyone is busy in their endeavors to make our community a great one! Morgan House has placed a renovated urn in the garden that was donated to the Morgan House Historical Society. Efforts are being made to restore the gardens to what may have been typical in the late 1800's. Red geraniums are planted each year in the urns at the sidewalk entrance of the home as this was a request of the Morgan family in their will.

We hope that anyone needing volunteer hours made it out to the Oshkosh Area Humane Society to help with spreading the mulch on this project. And speaking of hours...it is time to tally up all your hard earned efforts for the year. We will again ask that all members have their hours entered into the system by the September 10 business meeting.

Remember, board members, that we have a meeting on August 6. The Board has been busy updating the SOPs and should be ready very soon to share these updates with the membership. We thank **Sue Forbes, Nancy Karuhn** and **Joni Pagel** for taking on this task.

Business meetings will resume on Tuesday, September 10 at 6:00 PM at the Coughlin Center. We have a line-up of speakers for fall so look forward to some great talks!

September is also the time for anyone interested in taking the Master Gardener Level 1 training course for Winnebago County. It is required to attend an orientation session. Participants can choose to attend a session Tuesday, August 13 from 6:00 to 7:00 pm or Thursday, August 15 from 10:00 to 11:00 am. Registration is required for both sessions. Sessions will be held at the J.P. Coughlin Center, 625 E. County Rd Y, Oshkosh. At this session, you will learn about the Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program and the requirements to become a Master Gardener Volunteer. The Level 1 training will begin September 17. There will be 9 evening classes and one weekend session. Please let anyone you know who might have an interest!

Have a great August!

***Kathy and Linda***

## Book Report by Linda Baeten



The Master Gardener Book Club is currently reading Bringing Nature Home, How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants, by Douglas Tallamy.

Tallamy gives us a reason to increase the use of native plants in our landscapes beyond mere bird and butterfly watching. An Entomologist by profession, he became interested in insect-plant interactions through his studies and observations on his own 10 acre suburban lot. He points out that without plants, we cannot live on Earth, and the insects that feed on plants are essential

to animals and eventually to humans.

By reading this book, you will learn that insects and plants have evolved together to create a diverse population that works and lives sustainably. The introduction of alien species that have no natural predators will not support local ecosystems. Aliens may become so successful that they become invasive and choke out the natural biome. Due to leaf chemistry, local insects may not be able to eat alien plants to keep them in check, conversely, local plants may not have defenses to discourage alien insects.

There are fascinating scenarios of insect and plant interactions in this book which explains the dangers of continuing our current practices of pristine landscapes and overuse of alien plant species. Tallamy makes the case for incorporating native plants to support the “food web”. He gives advice on how to change your landscaping habits without alarming your neighbors. He suggests which plants to use and what insect and subsequent animal species need them to survive. In the past we created landscapes for aesthetics only; this will prove to be unsustainable. We need to coexist with nature, not compete with her to be able to sustain life as we know it.

The book is scientifically researched and explained in a way we can understand. The photography is outstanding. A must-read for all gardeners. (Note: This book is available from the [Oshkosh Public Library](#).)

## What's Wrong With My Tree?

By Lawanda Jungwirth

I enjoy representing WCMGA in the *Oshkosh Northwestern*. I welcome gardening questions from readers which is why I list my email address at the end of each column. I invariably learn something new while making sure to provide thorough, science-based answers to the questions posed. Sometimes I have to admit that I just don't know the answer for sure and I tell the questioner what I would do if it was my issue.

Recently, a reader sent a photo of a seven-year-old [catalpa tree](#). It had been doing fine until this spring when not even half of the branches produced leaves. I could see from the photo that the tree had been well cared for and it was located in a beautifully landscaped yard.

It was too early in the year to suspect insect damage or disease, so I studied the photo carefully to look for clues in the tree's physical environment that may have caused its decline.

The reader suggested that last winter's challenging weather may have been the problem. That's always a possibility, but even though last winter did have an extended extreme cold period, so have other winters in the last seven years. Last summer and fall had sufficient rainfall, and the tree shouldn't have been stressed when going into winter, so last winter's weather probably wasn't to blame.

Here are some of the possibilities I proposed that may have led to the tree's demise.

My first thought was that the tree may have been improperly planted. When a tree is removed from a nursery pot, it is often root-bound with roots circling around inside the pot. It can't just be plunked into a pot-sized hole in the ground as is. A wide hole should be dug with a slight mound in the center so the roots can be gently teased apart and spread out and downward from the trunk.

I couldn't tell from the photo the reader sent, but there may have been landscape fabric surrounding the tree. Synthetic landscape fabric and weed barriers can choke a tree when the trunk expands in size or can prevent water and nutrients from reaching the tree roots.

The photo showed black plastic edging surrounding the mulch at the base of the tree as well as several healthy-looking shrubs growing in the mulch. If the edging and shrubs were added after the tree was in place for a few years, tree roots may have been damaged during installation. Without sufficient roots, the tree might not have been able to take up adequate water and nutrients. Or, the shrubs may have been stealing what water and nutrients were available.

In the end, I had to admit that without complete information as to how the tree was planted, what was under the mulch, and when the edging and shrubs were installed, I didn't know what killed the catalpa. I hope that the possibilities I posed will help the homeowner plant and grow the catalpa's replacement successfully.

## **Wild parsnip**



While walking to the community garden, I noticed a section of Wild parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*) growing in a field within a village park. Wild parsnip is a non-native weed that originates from Europe and Asia. The earliest evidence of *P. sativa* in Wisconsin is from dried specimens at the UW-Madison herbarium dating back to 1894. ([Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine](#))

*P. sativa* can be identified by its flowers, which are numerous five-petaled, yellow flowers in flat umbels 2-6" wide. Rosette leaves are pinnately compound with 5-15 broad, ovate leaves. The *P. sativa* invades prairies, old fields, pastures and roadside.

*P. sativa* is a plant of concern, especially where a risk of contact with its sap is present. The sap contains a substance (furocoumarins) that when exposed to ultraviolet-A radiation in sunlight causes a severe skin reaction called phytophotodermatitis (PPD).

Two ingredients are needed. First, the skin must come into contact with the sap, which contains a substance known as furanocoumarins. The second ingredient is sunlight, which contains long-wave ultraviolet A (UV-A, 320-380 nm) radiation. UV-A is present on both sunny and cloudy days. When these two ingredients come together it creates a reaction that causes burning redness that may subsequently blister. In some cases, a pigmentation change in the skin occurs that can last weeks to months. ([Medscape](#))

When anticipating contact with *P. sativa* be sure to wear long sleeves, long pants and gloves. If possible, try to work after sunset so that exposure to sunlight does not occur. ([Wisconsin Horticulture](#))

There are chemical and non-chemical methods for controlling *P. sativa*. See [Management of Invasive Plants in Wisconsin, Wild Parsnip A3924-15](#) for control suggestions.



## WCMGA Summer Picnic 2019



*Photos submitted by Kim Willman.*

### Answer to What am I?

*By Jane Kuhn*

I am white turtlehead. Order: Scrophulariales. Family: Scrophulariaceae – Figwort family. Genus: *Chelone* L – turtlehead. Species: *Chelone glabra* L. – white turtlehead. Other names: Balmony, Snake-head, Turtle bloom, Fishmouth, Shell Flower, and Bitter Herb. *Chelone glabra* is named for its distinctive white blooms which are said to resemble a turtle's head. *Chelone* was one of the nymphs in Greek mythology. Native Americans used these turtleheads in their traditional medicine systems, using the plant as a mild laxative. They also made a tea using the whole plant for gall-bladder problems, nausea and colic. I can be seen in the raingarden at the entrance to the Coughlin Center.



References: USDA Plants Database and associated links.



# Wet, humid weather challenges vegetable disease management

Control measures should be initiated.

June 24, 2019 - Author: [Mary Hausbeck](#), Michigan State University Department of Plant, Soil and Microbial Sciences



*Wilting of pepper plants infected with Phytophthora crown and root rot. Photo by Mary Hausbeck, Michigan State University Department of Plant, Soil and Microbial Sciences.*

Moisture drives diseases more than temperature, especially this time of the growing season. The frequent rains and days with high humidity keep leaves wet for an extended period of time. The longer leaves are wet from rain, dew or fog, the more likely that pathogen spores (who may have found their way to their preferred host) will be able to germinate, penetrate the leaf and cause disease. Below, I've summarized the likely outbreaks that I've been thinking about.

## **Asparagus**

Rain prompts the release of purple spot (*Stemphylium vesicarium*) spores from their overwintering sites in the fern residue. Growers have reported purple spot on harvested spears so it's clear that our current weather pattern is causing an uptick in this disease. While there is not anything that can

be done to protect the harvested spears, growers should be protecting their younger plantings that are no longer being harvested and have begun to fern out.

Applications of a fungicide containing chlorothanil are recommended to begin for plantings that are no longer being harvested and could be considered to begin even before the fern is completely developed. Intervals between applications may need to be shorter than normal for this time of year. As long as these wet/humid conditions continue, fungicide applications to the fern every 7 to 10 days should be considered.

### **Cucumbers**

Cloudy, humid and wet weather are perfect conditions for downy mildew. These conditions also favor the transport of downy mildew sporangia into our Michigan growing areas. My lab has been monitoring for the downy mildew sporangia for over a month. The sites of the spore traps and the spore counts to date can be found at the top of Dr. Hausbeck's [Downy Mildew News](#) webpage listed under "Cucurbit Downy Mildew."

This year, we are able to distinguish between the sporangia from cucumber downy mildew and hop downy mildew. All of the sporangia that we've detected so far are the hop downy mildew which don't pose a threat to cucumbers. In past years, the first downy mildew field symptom has been found in the state in early July. All outbreaks of downy mildew in the state will be reported on the [Downy Mildew News](#) webpage. Current recommendations can also be found on this webpage in the Fact Sheet, "[Monitoring and Managing Cucurbit Downy Mildew](#)."

### **Peppers**

Phytophthora crown and root rot will surely be a problem this season as this disease is caused by a water mold that enjoys saturated soils. There is a [fact sheet available](#) on this webpage that offers specific information on how to manage this destructive disease. It's important to emphasize that fungicides applied to the foliage and the lower pepper stem are not effective. Research conducted in my lab over several years has clearly shown that fungicides are effective in protecting peppers when applied via drip as a soil treatment. Soil-applied fungicides and resistant cultivars are the only effective means of limiting crown and root rot on peppers.

## Onions

This crop has had *Stemphylium* leaf blight as an important foliar disease in recent years. Previously considered to be a secondary pathogen, it appears that *Stemphylium* is able to be a primary pathogen that must be controlled early in the season. Based on our fungicide field plots from last year, once the leaf blighting begins from *Stemphylium*, it seems nearly impossible to keep the foliage protected. Our research also showed that the fungicide Quadris and other strobilurin fungicides did not limit *Stemphylium* and are not recommended. For our field study, Luna Experience SC provided acceptable disease protection and produced the highest total yield.

It's important to consider using this fungicide early in the season, especially under wet conditions. Another important note from this field study is that mancozeb did not perform as well as well as chlorothalonil in protecting the onion foliage from *Stemphylium*. However, to protect onion foliage, a broad-spectrum protectant such as chlorothalonil will not be adequate and other, locally systemic fungicides, will be needed.

*This article was published by **Michigan State University Extension**. For more information, visit <http://www.msue.msu.edu>.*

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Another exciting day at the butterfly garden. On a recent work day we saw a newly emerged monarch butterfly still drying its wings. Pictured above is the chrysalis from which it emerged. We assume this started as one of the caterpillars we saw nearby several weeks before. Another first at the garden. *Submitted by Jane Kuhn.*

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## Member Business Meeting Minutes - No July Meeting





*Clematis Madness. Submitted by Valerie Stabenow.*

## Upcoming Events - See Calendar for August Events

Sept. 3, 10, 17, 24: Butterfly Garden 9:00 AM & Park View Cutting/Veg. Gardens 12:30 PM

Sept. 17: Education Committee, Benvenuto's 5:30 PM

Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29: Butterfly Garden 9:00 AM & Park View Cutting/Veg. Gardens 12:30 PM



**Thank you for sharing your gardens with us Ruth!**



<b>WCMGA Projects</b> <i>Check your Member Guide for contact information.</i>	
<b>Project</b>	<b>Project Lead(s)</b>
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	Sue Egner/Valerie Stabenow/Audrey Ruedinger
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	Eric Kropp
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	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](mailto:pakster0605@yahoo.com).

## WIFDN Update: Species Alert - Thistles

We checked in with our [Invasive Species Calendar](#) to see what plants are flowering in July that should be easy to detect. You can see our custom calendar above. All of our invasive thistles are in bloom right now, so it's a great time to look for them!



One of our invasive thistles, Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), is a perennial plant that spreads vegetatively and by seed. Because it spreads vegetatively, you'll often see it in dense colonies. Right now you can spot it by looking for patches of thistles with numerous 3/4" lavender colored flowers. You can learn more about Canada thistle from this [video](#) and [fact sheet](#).

There are several biennial thistles that are invasive, including musk (nodding) thistle (*Carduus nutans*), plumeless thistle (*Carduus acanthoides*), and bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*). As biennial plants, they spread by seed, so they are not typically found in dense patches like Canada thistle. They can also be differentiated from Canada thistle by their larger, darker colored flowers. You can view this [fact sheet](#) to learn about our invasive biennial thistles and also check out this [comparison table](#) to learn how to differentiate them.

Do you see thistles near you? Please take a closer look and send us your reports! Not sure which thistle you've got? We're happy to help you figure it out! You can email reports directly to us ([WIFDNcoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:WIFDNcoordinator@gmail.com)), submit a report online at [eddmmaps.org](http://eddmmaps.org), or use the GLEDN app. More information on EDDMapS and GLEDN is available at our [website](#).





**Bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*) has hairy leaves and large, gumdrop shaped flowers.**



**Plumeless thistle (*Carduus acanthoides*) has very spiny stems all the way up to its large flowers.**



**Musk thistle (*Carduus nutans*), like plumeless thistle, has very spiny stems. Unlike plumeless thistle, musk thistle's stem is smooth right below the flowerhead. As flowers mature, they start to nod downward, so musk thistle is also known as nodding thistle.**

**(Photo: Ben Johnston)**

August 2019						
Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6 Butterfly Garden 9 AM Park View Cutting/Veg. Garden 12:30 PM	7	8	9	10
11	12	13 Butterfly Garden 9 AM Park View Cutting/Veg. Garden 12:30 PM	14	15	16	17
18	19	20 Butterfly Garden 9 AM Park View Cutting/Veg. Garden 12:30 PM  Education Comm. Benvenuto's 5:30 PM	21	22	23	24
25	26	27 Butterfly Garden 9 AM Park View Cutting/Veg. Garden 12:30 PM	28	29	30	31

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