



# Winnebago County Master Gardeners

## Newsletter

August 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.

*"GARDENING is cheaper than therapy and you get TOMATOES!"*



Garden Walk at Chuck's.

Submitted by Deby Voyles.

## What am I?

By Jane Kuhn

I am a small, native, edible, herbaceous perennial herb that has a long bloom duration, showy flowers, and a high value to wildlife. I grow to a height of 2-4 feet and a width of 18-36 inches in zones 4-8. I grow best in full sun to partial shade in sandy loam to clay loam that drains well. On my four sided stems grow leaves which are opposite and 2 inches by 4 inches with serrated edges. At the top of my stems are 2-6 inch spikes of blue/purple flowers that bloom from late spring to late summer and are one of the earliest perennials to emerge in spring.

There are three ways to propagate my plant. My seeds germinate well after cold stratification. Division can occur in early spring when the first signs of new growth appear or in fall as winter dormancy begins. Another way to begin is with semi-soft stem cuttings. There are many species of bees and butterflies that visit my plant. Butterflies include skippers, Swallowtail and Monarchs.

## 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**

Open

### **Newsletter Compilation**

Anne Murphy



We would love your help! If you are interested in contributing to 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](mailto:pakster0605@yahoo.com). Each article submitted will count toward your volunteer hours. Thank you!

## Letter from your Presidents: Ed Dombrowski & Bob Kneepkens

Dear Winnebago Master Gardener Members,

We hope everyone is having a good summer. As gardeners we appreciate watching gardens grow, nurturing growth and harvesting vegetables (if you have a vegetable garden). This summer has a different feel to it. We are hoping, just hoping that things will return to normal and our ability to meet in person will be possible.

We are inquiring if rooms will be available in the fall for Board and Business meetings. It might be possible to resume in-person meetings. However, we will always follow the expectations from the University of Wisconsin's Master Gardener Program as to what or if in-person meetings are possible.

**We will notify you if the September Business meeting will be in person or via Zoom.**

The Board will be meeting in August and tentative plans include meeting in person at the Coughlin Center or an outside location. This is, hopefully, one step closer to returning to our earlier normal.

There is an important clarification about the **Mandatory Reporter Online Training**. After finishing Step 1, you are instructed to go to Step 2 (see image below). The title is “**Now to get credit for completing this training you need to complete Step 2**”. However, Step 2 does not work and is turned off. At this time, Step 2 does not need to be completed. You will get credit for completing this training.



Best Wishes,

Bob and Ed

## Two Quiet Natives for Your Garden

By Lawanda Jungwirth

It's not necessary that every flowering plant in your garden screams, "Look at me!" Sometimes your eyes and brain need a place to rest. Here are two plants native to Wisconsin that offer beauty but don't flaunt it quite as boldly as others. These are also good choices if you are in the process of transitioning to an entirely native planting.

Blue vervain and boneset are both sturdy perennial plants that will fill empty spaces in a garden and support other plants both physically and aesthetically.

Blue vervain (*Verbena hastata*) is a 3-5' tall narrow plant that blooms from early July into fall with small, dark blue to purple candelabra-like spikes of flowers. The leaves are toothed and slightly rough. As a cut flower it would be appropriate for a very large bouquet that includes other late summer bloomers and grasses. Blue vervain prefers full sun and does best in moist soil. A boggy or low spot or a rain garden would be ideal.

Common boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*) also prefers moist soil in a sunny spot. It grows 2-4' tall. The leaves are rough in texture but very pleasing to the eye. They are fused around the stem, so it appears that the stem is piercing each set of pointed leaves which together form an elongated diamond.

Boneset blooms beginning in early July and produces several clumps of fuzzy white flowers atop each stem. This flower would do fine in a bouquet and the flower heads can be dried for use in art and craft endeavors. Every year I anxiously await the bloom of boneset, only to realize once again, "Oh right, that's all there is." Somehow it seems that such a robust plant with such a promising beginning should produce a flower with a little more wow. Over the years though, I've grown to appreciate boneset as part of the larger landscape.

The following is not intended as medical advice, just an item of interest. Boneset gets its name from the use of its leaves in a tea by Native Americans and early settlers to cure "breakbone fever" – known today as dengue fever - which is characterized by severe aching down to the bones. An alternative explanation for the name is that when early herbal doctors observed the stems appearing to grow right through the leaves, they thought it signified that wrapping the leaves as bandages around splints would help to heal broken bones.

Above I referenced transitioning a garden to native plants. What are native plants and why should they be used in a landscape? Native plants are those that grew in a particular location prior to European settlement. Without exception they offer higher wildlife benefits than do imported plants and cultivars. They have adapted over hundreds or thousands of years to local climate and soils, so once established, they require little care in the form of watering, staking and fertilizing. Quiet beauty and little care – win, win!

## Answer to What am I?

By Jane Kuhn



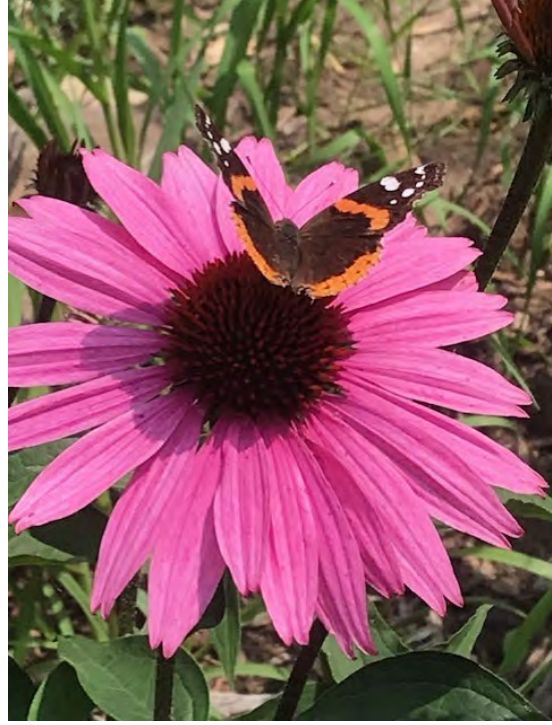
I am anise hyssop. Order: Lamiales. Family: Lamiaceae / Labiatae – Mint family. Genus: Agastache Clayton ex Gronov – giant hyssop. Species: Agastache foeniculum (Pursh) Kuntze – anise hyssop. Other names: blue giant hyssop, fragrant giant hyssop, lavender giant hyssop. The leaves of this aromatic herb have a refreshing smell and taste, like a combination of anise, licorice and mint. Anise hyssop is so valuable for bees that it has been used since the early 1900's. Beekeepers across the country

have cultivated Anise Hyssop to supply their hives with a steady source of nectar due to its long bloom duration. Anise hyssop was named the 2019 Herb of the Year by the International Herb Association. Anise hyssop can be found in the Butterfly Garden at Miravida Living and the flower cutting garden at Park View.

References: USDA Plants Database and associated links.



Zinnias in full bloom. Submitted by Kiim Willman.



Butterflies visiting Parkview Gardens. *Submitted by Jane Kuhn*



*Double Trouble hydrangea. Submitted by Kim Willman*

## **COVID-Approved Projects Open for Volunteers**

The following is a list of projects that are Covid-approved and open to Master Gardener Volunteers:

- **Butterfly Garden at Miravida Living**
- **Parkview Cutting Gardens**
- **Parkview Vegetable Garden**
- **Parkview Prairie Garden**
- **Oshkosh Area Humane Society Memorial Garden**
- **Rain Garden at Coughlin Building**
- **Morgan House**
- **Paine Art Center and Arboretum**
- **Octagon House**
- **Pollinator Garden at Neenah Public Library**
- **Carter Memorial Library, Omro**
- **Sullivan's Woods-invasive removal only**
- **Plant Health Advising-virtual**

Please see the **2021 Winnebago County Master Gardener Guide** and contact the **Project Lead** for more information.

## WCMGA Projects

*Check your Member Guide for contact information.*

Project	Project Lead(s)
Butterfly Garden Miravida Living Oshkosh	Jane Kuhn
Carter Memorial Library, Omro	Jenny Breining
Coughlin Rain Garden	Ed and Jill Dombrowski
Octagon House, Neenah	Jerry Robak
Invasive Species	Valerie Stabenow/Sue Egner
Morgan House	Kathy Schultz
Neenah Public Library	Susan Forbes/Bette Hoytink
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	Carol Swannell/Ruth Eberwine
Park View Flower Arranging	Lil Hansche/Diane Thompson
Park View Vegetable Garden	Tom Weber (with assistance from Renee Donner)
Farmer's Market	Synda Jones/Patty Schmitz
Plant Health Advisors	Mary Shepard
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).



## August 2021

Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
1	2	3 Board mtg. 6 PM Coughlin Ctr.	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

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