

Winnebago County Master Gardener February 2013

Volunteer Newsletter

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.

Presidents' Letter

The ground is covered with snow and the temperatures below zero and planting season is a mere thought away! As Mary told me what a perfect time to sit back and enjoy the many catalogs that are filling our mailboxes.

What a great turnout we had for our January meeting – it was wonderful to see the room so full. Hopefully we can keep everyone coming back with exciting speakers. If anyone has any suggestions, please let one of the officers or board members know.

A thank-you goes out to RoyAnne Moulton for the wonderful presentation she did on the Great Gardens of Philadelphia at our January meeting. I can hardly wait to see what she has lined up for us on the trip she is planning to Seattle and British Columbia this summer. I also want to thank Linda Loker for the great refreshments she lined up for the meeting.

It is not too late to sign up for the Level II training that is being held from February-June. The extension office is planning a place for viewing in the small conference room next to the office on Tuesdays from 9-11 a.m. You can also view the lectures from home.

To register go to <http://wimastergardener.org>.

Keep warm and think spring!

Mary and Linda



Winter Escapes

/Summer Dreams

Saturday, February 2

at Reeve Union

see page 3

Advisor's Note

As we enter February, many of us are already planning what we are going to do in our gardens this spring. However, as we make those plans we cannot forget about the weather of 2012 and how the drought will affect our plants in the coming up year. In 2012, we lacked normal rainfall amounts throughout the growing season and going into the winter. If we do not receive adequate amounts of moisture this winter and spring, many of our plants especially trees, will be stressed in the 2013 growing season. As many of you already know, when our plants are stressed it makes them susceptible to an array of deadly insects and diseases. But how does drought affect the physiological processes in a tree?

New research by the University of Western Sydney in Australia (published in *Nature* and highlighted on *NPR*) has given additional insight on exactly that. Trees take up water from the roots to their leaves through their xylem cells. As drought dries out the soil, the tree has to work harder to get the water it needs. In this process, the trees have the risk of drawing air bubbles into the tree's xylem. Research by plant scientist, Choat, explained as drought stress increases, more and more air bubbles accumulate in the xylem, until the tree cannot get any water up into the leaves. "This is really bad news for the plant because this is like having an embolism in a human blood vessel. Like a human embolism, the gas bubbles stop the flow of fluid. If that persists, it means thirst, starvation and eventually death."

The big question is, how much drought does it take before trees are affected? According to the research, it only takes a small shift in terms of moisture and temperature to push trees across the threshold between drinking and choking. For trees, there is a fine balance between eating (taking in carbon dioxide through stomata in their leaves) and drinking. So the more they eat, the more water they lose through the stomata. Lose too much water and risk a deadly embolism. In addition, the research showed that it doesn't take much drought before trees self destruct, even for trees adaptable to drier climates.

Trees, as with all plants, are adaptable up to a point. However, when the change is happening faster than they can adapt they become stressed, stop growing, and insects and diseases start to move in. So, as we go through 2013 do not forget about the stress our plants might be under and give them the proper love and care they deserve.

Also, remember now is the perfect time to be pruning those trees, especially your oaks. For more information see (http://dnr.wi.gov/news/Weekly/Article_Lookup.asp?id=2443).



Small Scale Tree Farming and Tree Pruning Workshop

This event is targeted at individuals who are considering or have begun developing a rural property into a multi-purpose tree farm. Enjoy a stroll on a forty acre property which includes over 20,000 nurtured forest trees and a small orchard. The landowner (retired educator) will discuss the project, now 23 years in the making, and offer pruning advice for fruit trees, hardwoods for saw log production, and pine plantations. There will be a hands-on demonstration in the orchard and you are encouraged to bring your favorite pruning tool. A walk in the woods will follow, discussing the challenges and rewards of such projects. Ample opportunity for questions and conversation is anticipated.

Interested parties should contact UW-Extension at 232-1971.

When: March 9, 2013

Where: Larson, WI (Directions will be given after registration is confirmed)

Cost: \$10.00 (Covers handouts and refreshments)

Time: 9:30 am - 10:00 am, registration and refreshments
10:00 am - 12:00 pm, program

Please dress appropriately for weather conditions. Limited to the first 20 participants.

Invasive Plants Resources

contributed by Anne Murphy



The Wild Ones held their annual conference this past weekend and I was able to attend the Invasive Plant Identification and Management session by Dr. Mark Renz who is a professor at UW Madison in the Agronomy Dept. It was one of those sessions that you come away thinking you'd love to share this good stuff with somebody—hence the article for you! Dr. Renz gave us some really good resources which include:

- Report Invasive Species at <http://GLEDN.org> – GLEDN (Great Lakes Early Detection Network) makes it easy to send reports to people who will use that information in the fight against invasive species. You can make reports using the webpage or by using their smartphone apps, which will be available later this winter. This site has some really interesting data that you can view about where these invasives have inhabited.
- <http://fyi.uwex.edu/weedsci/category/videos> - In case you're not sure what those invasives are supposed to look like, there is a series of videos providing invasive plant identification tips.
- <http://weedid.wisc.edu> – An interactive plant identification key with 355 of the most common weeds of Wisconsin. This key does not have the invasives included but was a very interesting site in case you're not sure what that “weed” is in your area.



Garden Dreams in February

Make your reservation now for the annual *Winter Escape~Summer Dreams* conference on **Saturday, February 2, 2013** at Reeve Memorial Union on the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh campus. This full day of gardening education includes knowledgeable speakers, a continental breakfast, lunch and vendors.

Keynote speaker Michael Yanny is an expert in the field of plant propagation. He has worked with Johnson's Nursery in Menomonee Falls for over 30 years and managed the Research and Development Department before purchasing the R&D materials to form JN Plant Selections, LLC in 2012. Yanny selected and introduced numerous new varieties of trees and shrubs during his career. He promises lively and humorous presentations on *Native Trees and Shrubs for Use in Wisconsin Landscapes* and *The Stories Behind the Plants from Johnson's Nursery*.

Sharon Morrisey, a Consumer Horticulture Agent and Master Gardener Advisor for the UW-Extension in Milwaukee County, will present *Small Space/Small Budget Vegetable Gardening*. A healthful, bountiful harvest is possible even in small city lots and Morrisey has a special interest in teaching the techniques that make it possible.

Register by January 18 for the early bird price of \$35 per person. After January 18, it will be \$40. Parking is free. For a registration form and more information, go to www.winnebagomastergardener.org or call (920) 231-5745.

This is an easy way to earn continuing education hours!

Flower Arranging

2013 dates are:

March 25
April 22
May 20
June 17
July 15
July 29 (the county fair bouquets)
August 12
September 23
October 7
November 18
December 2

Newsletter Contributions
To contribute an article or
more to the Newsletter
contact Diana Dougherty at
233-7137 or email to
dldoug5@charter.net

New or updated UWEX publications

Cranberry Pest Management in WI (A3276) - The latest recommendations for disease, insect, and weed pest management for cranberry crops.

Midwest Small Fruit and Grape Spray Guide (A3899) - This detailed publication tells you all you need to know about spraying small fruits for pests, with special sections on grapes, blueberries, strawberries, and raspberries as well as fungicides, insecticides, weed control, and other special pest problems.

Midwest Tree Fruit Spray Guide (A3314) - This publication, one of a series of publications for fruit growers in the Midwest developed by the Midwest Fruit Workers Group, offers the latest spray recommendations for apples, cherries, pears, peaches, and plums.

Wisconsin Corn Hybrid Performance Trials (A3653) - This newly revised 56-page publication presents the results of the 2012 performance trials for corn—including grain, silage, specialty, and organic—planted at 14 locations throughout Wisconsin. This data will help you choose the best hybrids to plant for your growing conditions.

Other interesting information:

DNR study shows Fox Valley area trees provide nearly \$5 million yearly in benefits – more information can be found at <http://www.itreetools.org/resources/projects.php>.

Did You Know? Fun Fruit Facts

84% of a raw apple is water.

An apple tree is at its prime when it's about 50 years old. The United States produces about 100 million barrels of apples a year. That's a lot of old trees.

A pineapple is a berry.

Americans eat more bananas than any other fruit: a total of 11 billion a year.

Bananas are actually herbs. Bananas die after fruiting, like all herbs do.

Banana oil never saw a banana; it's made from petroleum.

Avocados have the highest calories of any fruit at 167 calories per hundred grams.

What Am I ???

I am a perennial, herbaceous plant which grows from bulbs, one of the earliest flowers to bloom, even pushing through the snow in the coldest regions. Most of my species flower before the vernal equinox (March 20 or 21 in the Northern Hemisphere), aided by hardened leaf tips that can push through the frozen soil. Each bulb produces two or three linear leaves on an erect flowering stalk. My bell-shaped flower has no petals but consists of six tepals, the outer three being larger and more convex than the inner. I grow to four inches tall and wide and my flowers are white and nodding. My leaves die back a few weeks after my flowers have faded.

The downside to flowering in winter is that pollinating insects are scarce so I spread mainly through bulb division. My clumps can be lifted and divided just after flowering, replanted and allowed to die back naturally. Or, my bulbs can be divided when my plants are dormant. I prefer full sun to partial shade and well-drained soil in hardiness zones 3 to 8.

Native replacements for your favorite plants

By Lawanda Jungwirth

Native plants are those that were growing in a particular area when the first European settlers arrived. Many of these plants are still in existence and using them in our landscapes is a good idea for many reasons.

Since native Wisconsin plants have been growing here for hundreds of years, they are uniquely adapted to our soil and climate and therefore need less first aid from the gardener in the form of added water and fertilizer. This saves time and money and is good for the environment. Native plants support native insects, birds and animals that have evolved along with them over the centuries. In addition, plants native to our area define our part of the world and distinguish it from every other part of the world. They are part of our heritage, just as are the rivers, lakes and hills that comprise the topography of northeast Wisconsin.

What if you are convinced that native plants are the way to go in your landscape, but you are emotionally attached to your peony plant (which hails from Asia, Japan, China or Europe) because you transplanted it from your grandma's yard? That's okay – keep it and don't feel guilty.

But let's say that you have a peony plant that you just aren't that attached to. Peonies aren't beneficial to bees and insects since their fluffy flowers don't allow the insects to enter them to get to the nectar. Plus they attract ants. There are several native plants that can replace that peony that will play an important part in the ecosystem of your landscape, supporting many insects and birds. Some of the possible alternatives to peonies are cow parsnip, fire pink, indigo, large beardtongue, showy beardtongue, queen of the prairie, Sullivan's milkweed, swamp milkweed, wild blue phlox, wild lupine and wild roses.

How do I know this? I looked it up in a handy book entitled *The Midwestern Native Garden* by Charlotte Adelman and Bernard L. Schwartz. This book lists hundreds of your favorite common garden plants and at least one, but sometimes ten, native alternatives. The alternatives listed will thrive in the same sun/shade, soil, water and temperature conditions as the non-native plant did, but detailed cultivation requirements are listed for each native plant anyway. There are also Nature Notes for each plant, telling why the non-native is useless and listing the many valuable attributes of their native replacements.

This book is a valuable addition to your gardening library if you are trying to make your landscape more hospitable to birds and butterflies and save yourself some time and money in the long run. If you'd like to look before you buy, it is available through the Winnefox library system.

If you are interested in learning more about native plants and their many benefits, the following websites are excellent: www.wildones.org and www.wildflower.org.

Winnebago County Master Gardeners Association

Saturday, February 9, 2013

6:30 am- 6:30 pm

The Winnebago County Master Gardeners will be having a bus trip to the annual Madison Garden Expo, on Saturday February 9, 2013 at the Madison Alliant Center. Garden Expo is presented by Wisconsin Public Television and the UW-Extension. "Garden Expo offers you a space to Think Green and to begin planning for sunnier days. The event – now in its 20th year – celebrates the latest trends in gardening and landscaping and attracts more than 20,000 people from throughout the Midwest. Join gardening enthusiasts to share ideas, gain inspiration and create something new." Starting at 9:00 am until 4:00 pm, you can choose to sit in on 8-9 seminars or demonstrations on topics ranging from Favorite Perennials to Top Five Tips for a Productive Vegetable Garden. Go to www.wigardenexpo.com for more information. Usually you must preregister for the 'make and take seminars'. Spend some time strolling along the hundreds of vendors offering everything from seeds to garden art to tools and even outdoor living spaces! Food is available at vendors or bring your own lunch along. Enjoy an exciting day of learning and getting ready for a brand new year of gardening at Garden Expo!

Departure Sites and leaving time:

Oshkosh at the Coughlin Center, Cty Rd Y. at 6:30 am

Oshkosh at the Park-n-Ride on Washburn just off Hwy 44 at 6:45 am

Fond du Lac at the old Home Depot, Johnson St. at 7:00 am (across Hwy 23 from Forest Mall)

Meet back at the bus at 5:00 and depart Madison Expo at 5:15 arriving back in Oshkosh at about 6:30 pm

Cost is \$35.00, which includes bus transportation and ticket for Garden. Bring your own lunch, drinks and snacks or purchase your own food from vendors.

Please direct any questions to Marge Menacher at marmen4105@sbcglobal.net or call 920-233-3467.

Send your checks payable to WCMGA c/o Marge Menacher 4105 Westview Lane Oshkosh, WI 54904.

2013 Madison Garden Expo Trip Registration Form

(copy as needed)

Name: _____ Email _____

Address: _____ Phone _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

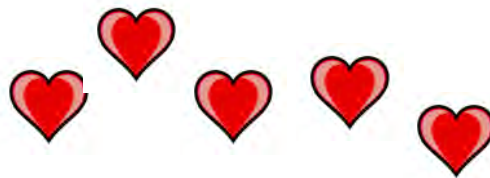
- Pick Up Location:
- Coughlin Center leaving at 6:30 am
- Washburn Park-n-Ride
- Fond du Lac (Old Home Depot)

Answer to What Am I ??

I am a common snowdrop. Order: Liliales. Family: Liliaceae – Lily family. Genus: Galanthus L – snowdrop. Common name: common snowdrop, milkflower. The name Galanthus comes from the Greek gala (milk) and anthos (flower), referring to the color of the flowers and providing the rarely used common name of milkflower. Snowdrops were used as a folk remedy for arthritis and digestive problems. Snowdrops are sometimes confused with their relatives, snowflakes (Leucojum and Acis species) which are much larger and bloom in spring or early summer.



References: USDA Plants Database and associated links.





Winnebago County Master Gardeners Board of Directors

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CORE PROJECTS

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Park View Cutting Garden	Bill Weber	231-2936
Park View Vegetable Garden	Tom Weber	233-3729
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The Wild Center	Mary Wiedenmeier	426-0991

February 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 <i>Winter Escapes/ Summer Dreams</i>
3	4	5 <i>MG Board Meeting 6:00</i>	6	7	8	9 <i>Madison Garden Expo</i>
10	11	12 <i>MG Business Meeting 6:00</i>	13	14 	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27 <i>Project Leads Meeting 5:30 Coughlin Cntr</i>	28		

March 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5 <i>MG Board meeting 6:00</i>	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 <i>MG Business meeting 6:00</i>	13	14	15	16
17 	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 <i>Flower Arranging Parkview 1:30</i>	26	27	28	29	30
31						