



Winnebago County Master Gardeners

Newsletter

January 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.

"Every gardener knows that under the cloak of winter lies a miracle."

Luther Burbank



What am I?

By Jane Kuhn

I am a native, herbaceous, upright perennial which grows from 3-4 feet tall and 3-4 feet wide in zones 3-9. My blooms occur from May to June and feature purple, lupine-like flowers and blue-green foliage on silver stems. My flowers give way to inflated seed pods which turn black when ripe and have seeds that rattle inside. I prefer full sun to part shade and dry to medium, well-drained soil.

Propagation is by seeds or cuttings. Since my seeds have a very hard coating, soaking them in hot water and scarifying them prior to planting is helpful. I have no major diseases or insect problems but I should be planted with good air circulation to prevent powdery mildew. I attract butterflies and other pollinators. I tolerate deer as well as a variety of conditions including drought, poor soil, dry soil and erosion. I am found in forest or natural areas, in woodland borders and open woods in addition to landscape in flower gardens. Since I am extremely long-lived and hard to transplant with my long tap root, a good spot should be chosen for my planting.

WCMGA Contacts

Check your membership guide for contact information.

Co-Presidents: Ed Dombrowski & Bob Kneepkens

Vice President: Kathy Procknow & Debra Butch
Secretary:

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 or submitting a photo, please let me know by the 15th of each month by emailing pakster0605@yahoo.com. Thank you!

UPDATE YOUR INFO!

Every year master gardeners are given a new membership booklet at our Awards Banquet. Each member is being asked to look over their current information in the booklet and submit any changes. Due to the change in our reporting year, we have extra time to do our information updates. This gives members additional time to submit any changes as to their contact information. Project and committee leads should also look at current information and submit any changes as well. [An updated picture of your project/committee would be a great addition too!](#)

All submissions should be made per email to Kimberly Miller, MG advisor, (kimberly.miller@wisc.edu), and to Ashley Rolph (arolph@co.winnebago.wi.us) by January 15, 2021. Onward to 2021!

Letter from your Presidents: Ed Dombrowski & Bob Kneepkens

Happy New Year!

Looking forward to 2021, there is optimism the COVID pandemic will be under control this year. We think the pandemic experience has highlighted the qualities of a gardener. As gardeners we practice patience, perseverance, hope & expectation, appreciation of nature, and the importance of scientifically backed information. These qualities are the antithesis of the immediate and instant access of a computerized world. It takes time, and we cannot rush nature. As gardeners we know planting in June does not result in a harvest in July.

"By becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer, we become a representative of the University of Wisconsin - Madison..."

A unique aspect of being a Master Gardener is using unbiased, research-based, scientifically supported information for training and guiding our projects.

The only constant is change.

This applies to volunteers in the Master Gardener Program. In 2021 and beyond, we must

Did you know?

Extension Master Gardener programs exist in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, several Canadian provinces, and South Korea.

"enroll" in the program each year. This includes activating your account in the Online Reporting System (if not done already), agreeing to the conditions of volunteer service and volunteer behavior agreement.

The enrollment process begins January 1 and ends March 15 and is completed in the Online Reporting System, prior to any volunteer

activity. The enrollment process helps ensure a safe experience for you, our clients, and Extension staff.

In February there is a Master Gardener recognition event. Watch for further information about details, as it may result in a change of date for the Business meeting.

The March Business meeting presenter is Dr. Bruce Krawisz, a semi-retired pathologist at the Marshfield Clinics and Hospital. He will be talking about climate change and health. Dr. Krawisz will leave plenty of time for questions, so jot down questions you may have for him.

Please stay safe and healthy.

Ed Dombrowski & Bob Kneepkens

Foodscaping

By Lawanda Jungwirth

The gardening catalogs are beginning to arrive. It's time to plan for the coming year!

In my opinion, one of the most beautiful features in any home landscape is a vegetable garden. Not everyone agrees. In fact, some homeowner's associations specifically prohibit vegetable gardens. But just because you don't have space for a vegetable garden or are forbidden to have one doesn't mean you can't grow your own food.

Vegetables and fruits are typically grown in long, straight rows. They are just as happy growing in flower beds, along a foundation, in hedgerows or in containers. This is called "foodscaping," the practice of integrating edible plants into an existing ornamental landscape.

You can beautify your landscape and feed your family at the same time. You are going to care for your landscape by watering, weeding and fertilizing anyway, so why not reap an additional benefit?

While the term "foodscaping" is relatively new, the concept is ancient. Archeologists have determined that edible plants were part of home landscapes in ancient Rome, Mesopotamia, Babylonia and Assyria. It wasn't until the world's population became urbanized and food production moved to farms outside of cities that home landscapes became food deserts.

One of the benefits of foodscaping is that pests and diseases have a hard time destroying an entire crop. Think of a typical vegetable garden. An insect or mammal could chomp its way down a row of carrots in a single night of destruction. But if those carrots are scattered among shrubs, flowers, and a few other pretty vegetable plants, most of them have a good chance of surviving. As for windborne plant diseases, they can't travel from tomato to tomato, for example, if other plants are blocking their pathway.

Your landscape has shrubs in it, right? Instead of spirea, potentilla, lilacs and weigelia, why not substitute currant, gooseberry, hazelnut, elderberry or sage? Instead of clematis, your trellis could support climbing beans or grapes. For trees, swap in apple, pear, cherry, plum, mulberry or serviceberry. Instead of vinca as a ground cover, try alpine strawberries, regular strawberries, thyme, or creeping mint. Chives and garlic chives have beautiful flowers in mid-summer. For an edge of greenery, plant parsley, carrots, spinach, Swiss chard, lettuce and other salad greens.

Many food plants have "ornamental" versions. If you are going to plant something, why not plant the edible version? Pears, plums, cherry, currant, peppers, and kale are examples.

If you are averse to planting zucchini and beans in your flower bed, consider growing edible flowers. Nasturtiums, violets, daylilies, johnny-jump-up, roses, lavender, pansies, impatiens and roses are all edible. Do some research to find the best way to use these blooms.

If container planting is your preference, there are a multitude of vegetable cultivars specifically developed for container growth.

You don't have to replace your entire landscape. Just tuck one tomato plant in a sunny spot along your home's foundation, or plant some pretty basil among other annuals in a flower bed. Of course, you shouldn't use chemical pesticides or herbicides in areas where you are growing edibles.

WCMGA Scholarship

By Jane Kuhn

The WCMGA is offering a \$1000 scholarship to a current high school senior who resides in Winnebago County. The applicant must be planning to attend a post-secondary educational institution to pursue a program related to the following areas of study: Horticulture, Landscaping, Agriculture, Forestry, Agronomy, Arborist, Conservation, Natural Resources, or other areas approved by the Scholarship Committee and the Board. The scholarship recipient will be based on a completed application including a typed essay and letters of recommendation. Applications are available from counselors at high schools where Winnebago County students attend, on the WCMGA web page (<http://winnebagomastergardeners.org/>) and Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/WCMGVA>). The deadline for applying is March 1, 2021. The scholarship will be awarded to the recipient in May.

Answer to What am I?

By Jane Kuhn



I am *Baptisia australis*. Order: Fabales. Family: Fabaceae / Leguminosae – Pea family. Genus: *Baptisia* Vent. – wild indigo. Species: *Baptisia australis* (L.) R. Br. – blue wild indigo. Common names: blue false indigo, false indigo, wild indigo, indigo weed, rattleweed, rattlebush, horsefly weed. The genus name *Baptisia* comes from the Greek word *bapto* meaning to dye. Several American Indian tribes have made use of the plant for a variety of purposes. The Cherokees traditionally used it as a source of blue dye, a practice later copied by European settlers. They

have also used the roots in teas to treat tooth aches and nausea. The Osage made an eyewash with the plant. Pods were once used as rattles by children. This plant was the Perennial Plant Association's 2010 Perennial Plant of the Year. I can be found in the rain garden adjacent to the Coughlin Center.

References: USDA Plants Database and associated links.

Member Business Meeting Minutes - No Dec. Meeting

Upcoming Events - See Calendar for January Events

Continuing Education Opportunities Linda Werner

It looks like in-person continuing education still won't be possible during the first part of 2021. Winter Escape~Summer Dreams and the usual spring conferences sponsored by other Master Gardener groups are not being held. However, on-line opportunities continue to grow. Those listed on the WCMGA website and Facebook page are approved for MG continuing education credit. New programming for January includes:

North Central Master Gardeners Garden Visions Conference (Virtual) January 30, 8:30 a.m. – noon. \$5. <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/marathonmg/garden-visions/>

Citizen's Lake Monitoring Network Webinars:

"Nitrate in Groundwater and Streams", Wednesday, January 6 at noon. No cost.

<https://uwmadison.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEtdumspzopH9LHXUJa8HZATDkkwpLMh4U6>

"Groundwater and Lakes", Wednesday, January 27, 3 p.m. No cost.

<https://uwsp.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUudO2hqT0tH9CTdw81QGI-hArP1qAsjVDh>

Melinda Meyers Webinars:

"Improve Your Indoor Environment with Houseplants", Wednesday, January 13, 6:30-7:30 p.m. No cost. <https://www.melindamyers.com/>

"Grow Flavorful and Nutritious Herbs Indoors" Wednesday, January 20, 6:30-7:30 p.m. No Cost. <https://www.melindamyers.com/>

The WPT Garden and Landscape Expo is also going virtual on February 20-21. Not all the seminars/workshops offered are eligible for MG Continuing Education Credit. The January edition of "The Vibe" newsletter will provide guidance. In the meantime, the event schedule is already posted at: www.wigardenexpo.com

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

Tuesday, January 19, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. CST, Pesticides and Pollinators on the Landscape:

Understanding the Risks, Choosing Solutions

Friday, February 26, noon-2 p.m. CST, Buying Bee-Safe Plants: How You Can Help

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, February 4, 10 a.m. CST, Relationships, History, Hip Hop, and Forestry: Thinking About Diversity and Inclusion in the Environmental Sciences

Thursday, February 11, 10 a.m. CST, Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Biodiversity Conservation

Thursday, February 18, 10 a.m.-noon CST, Arboretum Research Symposium

Thursday, February 25, 10 a.m.CST, How Microbes Shape Our Lives, Transform the Environment, and Influence Climate

Thursday, March 4, 10 a.m. CST, Holy Ground: Working With Faith and Indigenous Leaders to Build Resilience

Thursday, March 11, 10 a.m. CST, Beyond the Clinical Walls: Environmental Determinants of Health

Thursday, March 18, 10 a.m. CST, Climate Change and Wisconsin's Forests: What We Know, What We Expect, and How to Adapt

Thursday, March 25, 10 a.m. CST, Treaty Rights, Culturally Important Beings, and Indigenous-led Climate Adaptation in the Ojibwe Ceded Territories

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

University of Illinois Extension (Free)

<https://extension.illinois.edu/news-releases/learn-identify-trees-winter-bark-twigs-buds?fbclid=IwAR1Ekn2Hz0tjelGleH5ssUa9LJ7v5gHSGRxifwF9Cfh8oklm9tgziBsORSo>

February 1, 3, 5, 2-3 p.m. CST, Winter Tree ID Webinar Series

Cozy up with a seed catalog and set your gardening intentions

December 16, 2020 - Natalie Hoidal, University of Minnesota Extension educator

One of my favorite holiday traditions is to spend an afternoon by the fireplace with seed catalogs. Every year I try to take a few days off over the holidays to spend quietly at home, reflecting on the past year and setting intentions for the coming year. A part of this process is reflecting on last year's garden and dreaming up ideas for next year.

These are some of the things you might reflect on this year as you look through catalogs and choose seeds for your 2021 garden.

Did you have too much produce? Not enough?

Wooden box with open sides painted light green. It has "Little Free Seed, Plant, Flower library" painted across the top, and the box has a wooden slanted roof with a piece of siding on top.



Most gardeners have grown too much of something at some point. If you've ever grown cucumbers or zucchini, you've likely reached a point in the summer where you have so many you're not sure what to do with them. If your neighbors and friends are gardeners, they're in the same boat and have no interest in your extra produce.

Growing "too much" food is an opportunity to feed your neighbors. Spend some time connecting with local food pantries or churches to see if they are looking for produce donations next year.

Or consider building a little free library. We built a little free plant library last summer where we put bouquets of flowers and extra produce from our garden. It was a highlight of our summer. Our little library helped us get to know our neighbors and gave me an excuse to make bouquets every

morning. Don't let the ornate little free libraries make you feel like you shouldn't build one due to a lack of skill, it's the thought that counts!

- There's always something I wish I had more of each year; this year it was broccoli and beans. Make note of anything you were lacking last year, and make some more space for it this year.
- If you have more produce than you can eat, preserve, or give away, consider adding some more shelf-stable plants to your garden this year such as dry beans, popcorn, amaranth, or herbs for tea. These crops have become some of my favorites to grow.
- Don't feel like you need to grow everything! There are so many amazing local farmers to support throughout the year.

How can you prioritize soil health in 2021?

A hand-drawn garden plan with 9 beds labeled: Perennial herbs on landscape fabric, Amaranth / Sweet corn, Dry beans bush habit, Dry beans trellis, Tomatoes & Peppers, Onions, Beets, & Carrots, Cucumber & Squash, Broccoli & Other Brassicas, Lettuce - Buckwheat cover crop - Lettuce. Cover crops are written the sides of the beds. The top beds are labeled Fall: oats & peas, the cucumber bed is labeled Phacelia, and the bottom beds are labeled Midseason buckwheat.



on

As you plan your garden for 2021, do you see any windows of time where you can squeeze in a cover crop? Building soil organic matter is an important part of

garden resilience; soils with more organic matter do a better job of holding on to nutrients and water. An easy and effective way to build soil organic matter is to include cover crops.

My personal goal for 2021 is to include a [cover crop](#) in every bed at some point during 2021. In some beds, this means adding a fall cover crop mix like oats and peas after harvesting in early September. In others where I'll harvest earlier, like cucumbers, I plan to add [phacelia](#), a beautiful lacy plant with

purple flowers that bumble bees love. And in beds where I plan to plant an early spring crop and a fall crop like lettuce or broccoli, I plan to add a summer buckwheat cover crop.

In the past I've used wood chips between beds as a way to keep the garden clean and reduce weed pressure, but this year I'm going to use white clover. Clover adds organic matter to the soil over time, and if left to flower, provides valuable nectar to pollinators.

Don't feel like you need to plant a cover crop in every bed. Challenge yourself to start small with one bed, and build up towards more as you get the hang of it.

Minimize disease pressure in 2021

Did you have any particularly challenging pathogens in your garden in 2020? If so, I hope you took the time to identify them. If you know which diseases you struggled with last year, you can look for resistant varieties to plant in 2021.

Seed catalogs include information about resistance traits, but I tend to start with [this resource](#) from Cornell, which provides a long list of varieties from many companies. It's a great place to start if you're looking for resistance to a specific pathogen.

In addition to resistant varieties, [remember to rotate your crops](#). An ideal rotation is 3 to 4 years, so if you planted tomatoes in your garden bed last year, try not to plant anything from the Solanaceous family (tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, tomatillos, potatoes) in that spot for the next few years.

Have fun!

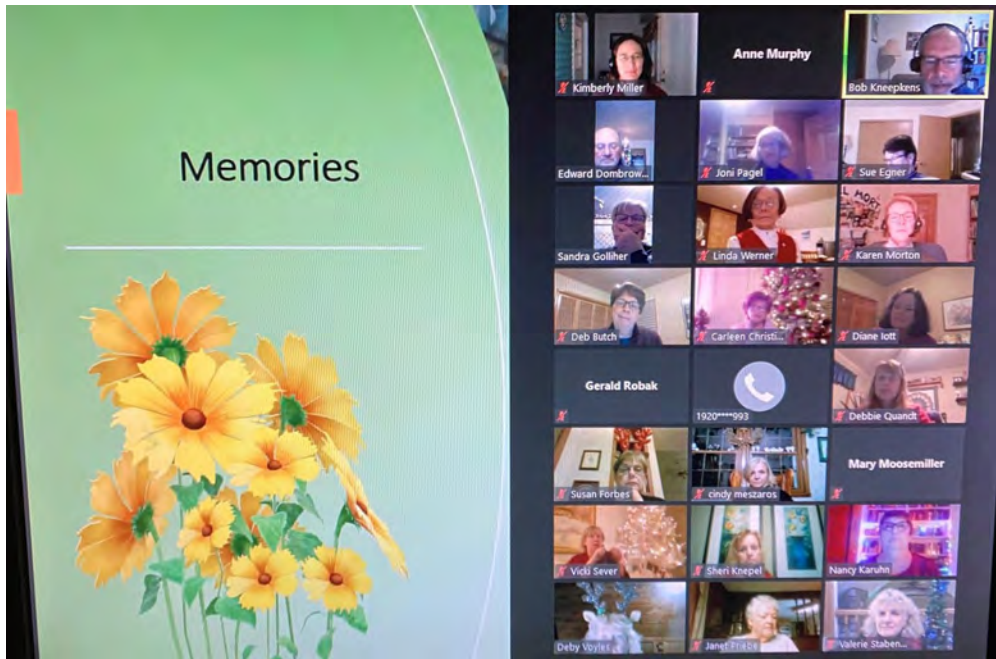
Gardens are therapeutic. They bring us joy for a wide variety of reasons. Some people find the greatest joy in flavor, others find garden joy in colors and textures. Rainbow carrots may yield a bit less than standard orange carrots, but if it makes you happy to pull purple, yellow, and red carrots from your garden, plant them!

When I started gardening, I had a very utilitarian approach. I felt like I needed to maximize production from my small space. But over the years, I've begun to add more flowers and plant fun varieties just for the joy of it.



In particular, I've invested more space this year into heirloom dry beans. Not only do I love growing beans, but it brings me joy to see them in my cupboard all winter long.

I've found that as a result of adding flowers and fun varieties, I enjoy my garden more, and I see secondary benefits like more beneficial insects as a result of the flowers.



Awards Banquet 2020
Zoom Style



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	Eric Kropp
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.

January 2021						
Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
					1 	2
3	4	5 Board Mtg.	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 Business Mtg.	13	14	15	16
17	18 	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

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