



Winnebago County Master Gardeners

Newsletter

July 2020

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 adds
years to your life
and life to your
years.*



Purple Allium. Photo submitted by Kim Willman.

What am I?

By Jane Kuhn

I am a perennial, native, cool season, clump forming sedge that grows to a height of three feet and a width of two feet in zones 3-7. My stems grow close together in compact clusters or tufts with my leaf blades folded lengthwise and mostly produced higher up on the plant. I prefer full sun to part shade in wet to moist, neutral and alkaline soils. I bloom from June through July followed by slender, brown seed heads forming through August.

Propagation is with seeds and best if planted in the fall, between October 15 and November 15. A late fall sowing allows dormant seed to be naturally stratified over the winter. An early spring sowing in April will work but not as effectively. I will grow to maturity in one season from seed. I am commonly found in marsh and wetland areas. I am a valuable sedge for wetland restoration, lake shores and raingardens. I am an essential food source for many birds and waterfowl.



Purple Allium. Photo submitted by Kim Willman.

WCMGA Contacts

Check your membership guide for contact information.

Co-Presidents: Ed Dombrowski & Bob Kneepkens

Vice President: Britton Dake

Secretary: Susan Raasch

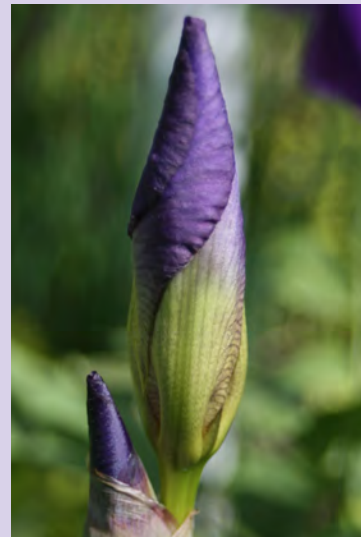
Treasurer: Deby Voyles

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!



Purple Iris. Photo submitted by Kim Willman.

Letter from your Presidents: Ed Dombrowski & Bob Kneepkens

As of this writing, and as part of the gradual opening, there are three projects approved for Master Gardener volunteers. The selection of those projects was done by asking board members to prioritize projects based upon the criteria that improves access to food, manages natural areas, improves community greenspace or teaching/display gardens. The UW-Division of Extension Master Gardener developed the criteria to use. The prioritization is not an indication of the worth or value of a project for host organization or of the volunteers in the Master Gardener program.

Remember the merger with the University of Wisconsin – Madison and the impact it has on the Master Gardener program? Well, those changes continue to be discussed and developed. Organizational change is a complex process but with the addition of the COVID-19 pandemic it becomes a near impossible process. We are truly fortunate to have **Kimberly Miller** guiding us through these complex times. She is doing an outstanding job rising to the occasion, keeping us informed and helping us adapt to continuous changes.

Looking forward, we are exploring options for holding board meetings. Given the social distancing requirements for conducting meetings, there is not a room available that could hold all board members. One idea is to have a combination of in-person and electronic (Zoom) meetings.

We will also be discussing with the Board how to conduct member meetings. There is not a room large enough to have all members attend in-person at the same time.

As Master Gardener volunteers for the UW-Division of Extension, we provide science-based information about horticulture. During the COVID -19 pandemic, the importance of having science-based information is critical. Our current situation has given us an even greater appreciation of science-based information and science-based decision making.

Please stay safe and healthy.

Ed Dombrowski

Bob Kneepkens

Projects Approved for Volunteers

- Miravida Butterfly Garden - Jane Kuhn
- Octagon House - Jerry Robak
- Park View Gardens - Jane Kuhn and Donna Kudlas

Please remember there are NO requirements for volunteer hours this year (only continuing education), so do not feel like you have to volunteer. During this time each person has to do what is best for them and their family. So, if you do not want to volunteer on a project it is completely understandable.

Keep in mind that the available times to volunteer on these projects are limited. And if you volunteer, please record your hours in the Online Reporting System.

To Volunteer :

- All volunteering will require you to pre-register (sign up) with the lead ahead of time. You cannot just show up. Leads are required to track who works and when. This has to be reported to Extension.
- All shifts for working will be in 2 hour increments.
- You will sign up to work a designated garden area. Only 1 volunteer or household per area per shift. No deviation from this is allowed.
- Read and be familiar with the guidelines for community gardens, <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/community.htm>
- Read and be familiar with any information the project lead sends to you.

When working:

- Maintain 6 feet or greater distance from other people at all times.
- Wipe down/sanitize any shared touch points before and after use. Such as water spigots and hoses.
- Individuals will bring their own tools and equipment.
- You will not have access to any surrounding buildings/facilities.
- Hand sanitizing equipment (soap and water preferred, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, tissues, etc.) will be readily available and frequently used. Please use the sanitizer upon arrival and departure.
- All PPE residue/debris will be removed by the volunteer and disposed off site. Do not use shared trash cans.
- Signs will be posted on site on how to stop the spread of COVID-19. Please refer to these as needed.
- Individuals will be asked to wear protective face coverings, and a supply of disposable masks will be available for those who do not bring them.
- You may be asked to leave based on health concerns associated with COVID-19.
- You are asked to stay home when you are experiencing any of the symptoms of COVID-19 or have had known contact with anyone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
- Practice good hygiene by avoiding touching your face, mouth, nose, and eyes, and covering coughs and sneezes.
- If you learn that you or someone you have had close contact with has tested positive for COVID-19, contact the lead and Kimberly.

You have to be willing to abide by the above requirements to volunteer.

New: Continuing Education Policy

By Amy Freidig, Outreach Specialist

In order to provide better clarity and reduce confusion, a group of Master Gardener coordinators and MGVs worked to create a detailed continuing education policy. The spirit of the policy is to give you **as many continuing ed opportunities as possible** while still making sure that they **meet certain requirements**. These requirements are designed to ensure quality information and relevance to your volunteer work. Feedback on the policy (both MGV and coordinator) has been great!

The policy is long so I'm going to ask that you take the time to read it where it lives: on the MG website in the Toolbox in the Policies green box.

Click and scroll to the green Continuing Education bar:

<https://wimastergardener.org/policies/>



What stays the same:

- General requirements for recertification (10 hours per year, based on time)
- Reported in the ORS on the honor system
- Some things count, some things don't
- Emphasis on unbiased, research-based information

What is different:

- New, specific requirements for what qualifies as appropriate continuing ed
- Best practices
- (Some) books are allowed! *****Please read the specifics about how time will be counted.*****

- Approved Media List: Things found on this list will count for CE. It is going to be updated over time so it will grow. If you want to have something count that isn't on the list, talk about it with your coordinator.
- Specific categories of CE: Appropriate, May Be Appropriate, Not Appropriate. Here's what each means:

<p>Appropriate for Continuing Ed: These will all count.</p>
<p>May Be Appropriate for Continuing Ed: These <i>may</i> count for continuing education hours; you need to be able to provide a justification to your local MG coordinator explaining how this continuing education source helps you develop your skills as a MGV.</p> <p>**Please note, we aren't expecting you to contact your coordinator and provide a justification for all of your continuing ed. If you <i>have a question</i> about whether something in this category should count, you will need to talk with your coordinator and see if it meets the requirements.</p> <p>For example, perhaps you want to attend a Garden Expo seminar on how to build a fairy garden. That's not going to use research-based, unbiased info, <i>but.....</i> you are going to work on building a fairy garden with the youth group you volunteer with this summer and this seminar will help you get ideas and guidance. You could justify it to your coordinator by explaining that this seminar will contribute to your ability to volunteer (meets the 1b requirement) and it falls within the scope of the program because your fairy garden project is helping to connect people with plants and that helps build a strong, healthy community (meets requirement 2).</p>
<p>Not Appropriate for Continuing Ed: These will not count.</p>

Raised Beds

By Lawanda Jungwirth

There are many reasons why a gardener might want to utilize raised beds. One of them – better drainage - became very apparent a few weeks ago when more than two inches of rain fell over a short period of time. Other reasons include: raising the soil even a few inches makes it easier on your back for weeding and harvesting; the soil warms faster in spring allowing for earlier planting; the soil is never stepped upon so it doesn't become compacted; it is easier to exclude pests; you can plant more in less space; you don't step on or trip over plants; and raised beds make for a beautiful and tidy garden.

Raised beds range from casual to formal, from inexpensive to costly, and from on-ground to waist high.

The easiest way to construct a raised bed is to rake soil from pathways into long mounds. Voila! - raised bed. Soil can also be brought in to create the mounds.

Most people prefer an edge on their raised beds. Materials include wood, stone, galvanized steel, straw bales or plastic lumber. For wood, choose cedar, redwood, or untreated landscape timbers. Avoid railroad ties and treated lumber for beds that will grow food as chemicals in the lumber will leach into the soil and be taken up by the roots of food crops.

Cinder blocks laid end to end make a good edging. Large field stones or piled bricks make a more casual edge. For the non-DIYer there are many raised bed kits on the market. There will still be some assembly required.

Raised beds can be any shape or size but they should not be more than 48" wide so the gardener can reach into the middle from both sides.

If the bed is raised off the ground don't use soil dug from the ground. A lighter weight soil mix is needed, so choose a bagged product labeled garden soil, potting soil or raised bed soil. If you go the off-the-ground route, be sure the bed is constructed so that the soil is at least 12" deep for most plants, and 24" deep for tomatoes, peppers or kale.

When planting, there is no need to allow space between rows. Let's say the seed packet says to place seeds 4" apart within rows and to allow 2' between rows. That 2' is for walking space which is not needed so seeds can be spaced 4" apart in every direction.

Is a raised bed in your future for next year? You can construct it this year right over your existing lawn by laying large pieces of cardboard or thick layers of newspaper over the grass and weighing it down with rocks or bricks. Throw grass clippings, weeds that haven't formed seeds, leaves and anything else you might throw into a compost pile into the area all season. Add soil this fall or next spring and you'll be ready to go!

Growing Protein

By Lawanda Jungwirth

Most of the plants we grow in our vegetable gardens provide us plenty of nutrients in the form of vitamins and other micronutrients. Very few provide protein. One family of plants, legumes, does provide significant amounts of protein, along with dietary fiber. Dried beans like navy beans, black beans, pinto beans, lima beans, great northern beans, kidney beans and adzuki beans are an easy-to-grow source of protein.

Dried beans are planted and grown in the same way as the familiar bush bean or pole bean. Their large seeds make them a good choice for new gardeners and children.

Beans need a spot that gets at least six hours of sun a day, but more sun is better. Wait until the soil warms and dries in spring or early summer, because the seeds are prone to rot if planted in cool, moist soil. The seed packet provides information about seed spacing and planting depth.

Bush beans grow about 18 inches tall and are planted as a row crop. Pole beans require some kind of structure for the beans to climb upon.

The pole bean climbing structure needs to be taller than you might think – the vines may grow to six or eight feet. It must be very sturdy. The weight of the vines and the beans is tremendous. Add the weight of rain water and the force of wind during a storm and a flimsy structure will have your beans lying in the dirt. A traditional way of supporting pole beans is to lean and tie tall stakes together in teepee fashion. Another option is to space tall poles along a row and string strong rope every foot or so between the poles for the beans to climb on.

Once plants have germinated, a light mulch can be placed around them, not touching the stems, to control weeds and hold soil moisture.

Instead of picking the bean pods throughout the growing season, they are left on the plants until the leaves fall off the plants and the pods are dry enough that the beans rattle inside them. This will likely be after the first fall frost. The seed packet will list the days to maturity for the bean you choose, but the range for dried beans is 70 to 120 days from planting to harvest.

After harvest, remove beans from pods and store them in a cool, dry place for up to one year. If the pods aren't quite dry at harvest, spread them on a screen or newspaper in a warm location until they are crisp. Remember to save some of the beans to use as seed for next year's crop.

There are many dried bean varieties to choose from. Along with the "regulars" listed above, there are [heirloom beans](#) that have pods from 3 to 14 inches in length and produce beans in an array of colors – red, pink, blue, purple, black, brown, cream, green - sometimes with pretty streaks or speckles.



From the Tool Bucket

a monthly review of various tools, suggestions for using them and how to care for them, compiled and written by Valerie Stabenow. Any opinion expressed in this review is that of the reviewer with no opinion of the WCMG or UW Extension inferred or implied.

Shovel-ready, Ace of Spades, so is it a shovel or a spade? This month we are going to look at various form factors of what are commonly referred to as shovels, but may be spades. What is the difference?

Basically, shovels are flat, broad-bottomed tools, designed to move loose materials, while spades tend to have an edge better designed for digging. In this photo, shovels are the two on the left, and spades are the other three.



So what are these shovels and spades and what are they best used for?

Let's do shovels. Shovels are best used for moving material... stone, sand, loose soil.

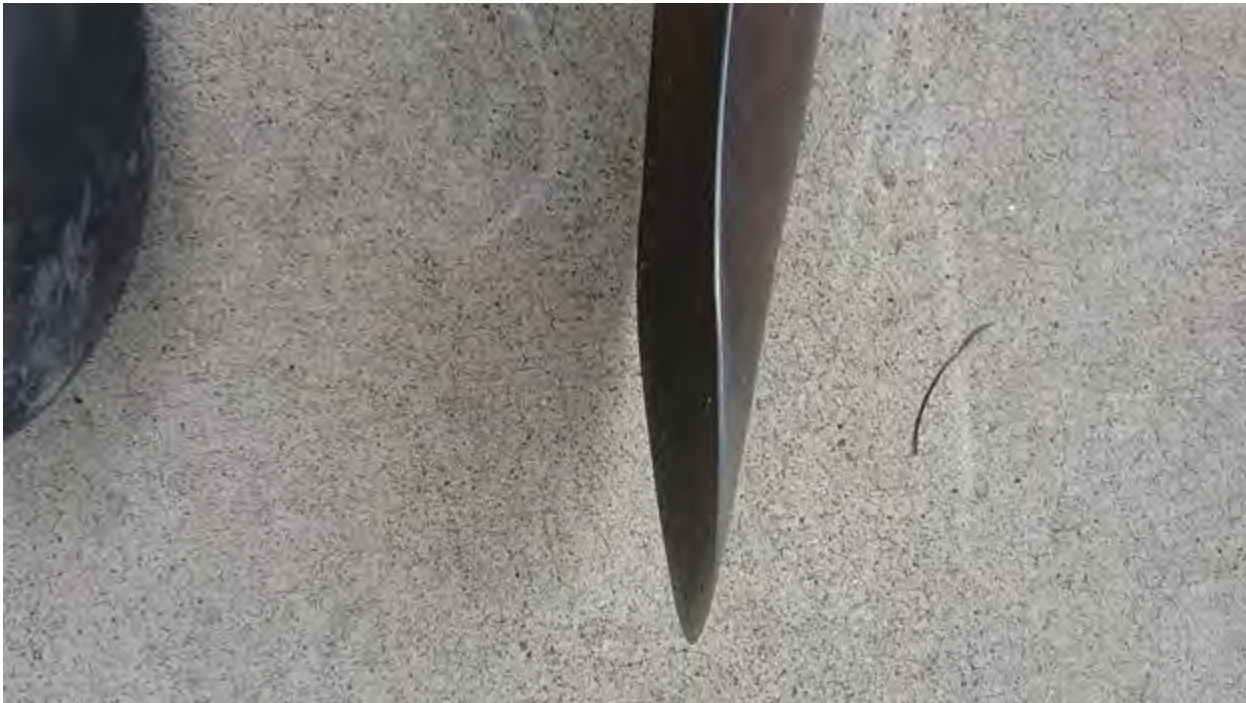


Note the flat, broad-bottom both these shovels have. The shovel on the left is one we use for moving sand, loose soil, pea gravel. The shovel on the right is most commonly called a 'barn shovel'. It is made out of aluminum, so it is lightweight and can move a lot of material. I have used this for shoveling mulch and snow.

Now let's take a look at spades. Again, these have rounded tips and are best for digging.



The spade on the left is commonly called a “sod spade” as it is useful for cutting and lifting sod. I also like it for planting small shrubs, roses, things like that. Like most spades, it has a sharpened tip to cut through soil, roots, etc. It also has a ‘step’ on each side of the handle for your foot to aid in pushing down. The middle spade is a smaller version of a standard spade. I like this because if I am digging, the load of dirt it carries is manageable weight-wise for me. It doesn’t dig as much as the standard spade on the far right, but is useful for planting perennials, small bushes and shrubs. I also use it to stir and mix what I use for potting soil in my garden cart and then dispense it into the pot, urn, or whatever planter I am working on. The spade on the far right is a standard spade. All of these have sharpened edges and tips, shown in this photo:



Remember all the sharpeners we looked at in last month’s Tool Bucket article? I routinely use my sharpener on the edges and tips of my spades. It does make a big difference in cutting ability.

Lastly we have a couple of specialty spades. This one is called a “half-moon” spade and is used mainly for edging. It has the ‘steps’ on either side of the handle and also needs to be kept sharp to maintain its cutting ability. I use this to tidy up and trim the edges of the sod around a planted area, if it has become overgrown.



You may also be familiar with a Parsnip Spade, often sold as “Parasnip Predator”. With its serrated edges and sharp tip, it makes quick work of removing invasive Wild Parsnips. Similar spades are called “Root Assassins”.



So, if you are in the market for a new shovel or spade, what are some considerations?

First, don't buy the least expensive one, unless you only plan on using it for a season or two. The inexpensive ones are like any other inexpensive tool, you get what you pay for. Cheaper shovels and spades will often bend and snap under pressure. The better ones have good hardwood handles, usually hickory or ash. Check out the usual sources and be sure to read the reviews. Often the reviewers bring up some aspect of the tool that I hadn't thought of and it was enough for me to reconsider that particular tool.

What kind of care do spades and shovels need? Clean them off after use and if used in an area or with material that might have disease, sanitize them as well. Some gardeners keep a bucket of sand with some 10W30 motor oil in it, and work the shovel/spade up and down in the sand. It cleans off the surface and the oil tends to help keep rust away. If the wood handles become rough, a good surface sanding with some 80 grit sandpaper will help remove wood fibers that tend to become splinters. And if you like a nice sharp edge on your spade, a routine sharpening after one or two uses really helps.

Here is a website that shows even more types of shovels and spades..

<https://www.garagetooladvisor.com/hand-tools/types-of-shovels-and-their-uses/>

Next month I will take up a tool commonly called a 'grub hoe' or 'grub axe', but whose correct name is 'mattock'.

Answer to What am I?

By Jane Kuhn



I am Bebb's sedge. Order: Cyperales. Family: Cyperaceae – Sedge family. Genus: Carex L. – sedge. Species: Carex bebbii Olney ex Fernald – Bebb's sedge. Other name: Bebb's oval sedge. The common and Latin names are from an amateur botanist Robert Bebb who was particularly interested in sedges. He lived in Oklahoma later in life and donated his collection to the University of Oklahoma, where now exists the Bebb Herbarium. Bebb's sedge is a long living plant, at times living upwards of twenty years. I can be found in the rain garden adjacent to the Coughlin Center.

References: *USDA Plants Database and associated links.*



Purple Iris. Photo submitted by Kim Willman.

Member Business Meeting Minutes - No June Meeting

Upcoming Events - See Calendar for July Events

Oct. 19: Flower Arranging, Park View Great Room



Photos submitted by Kim Willman.

Wisconsin First Detector Network Update

Poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*) is one of several invasive plants in the carrot family. All parts of the plant are toxic to mammals if ingested, so it is important to be able to differentiate this plant from other, edible, members of the carrot family!

Poison hemlock is in bloom now and is most likely to be found along roadsides, in wet ditches, or in riparian areas. Each plant grows up to 10 feet tall and has many branches topped by white umbel-shaped flower heads up to 3" across. The compound leaves are divided and fernlike and have an unpleasant odor when crushed. The stem is slightly ridged and hairless, with purple blotches, especially in the lower part of the plant. Other members of the carrot family that are most likely to be confused with poison hemlock have different characteristics like hairy stems (e.g., wild chervil) or entirely purple stems (e.g., angelica).

You can learn more about poison hemlock from our ID video or management fact sheet. You can also learn more details about differentiating members of the carrot family in this carrot family comparison guide.

Do you think you see poison hemlock near you? Please report it! Your reports help us fill in the map for each species, which helps land managers and researchers more effectively combat invasive species. Use the GLEDN app or email us (WIFDNcoordinator@gmail.com) with the species name, date you saw it, location, and photos.

1. The name of the species (or what you think it is)
2. The date you saw it
3. The specific location (GPS coordinates are best)
4. Photos of the invasive species (so we can verify the identification)

You can report that information in an email to us (WIFDNcoordinator@gmail.com) or use the GLEDN app.

Species Alert

Poison Hemlock (*Conium maculatum*)



What to look for:

- Umbel shaped flowerheads on **highly branched** stems; plants up to 10' tall
- Compound **fern-like leaves**; **unpleasant odor** when crushed
- **Hairless stems with purple blotches**

Where to look:

- Roadsides, wet ditches, riparian areas

Look-alike species:

- Other species in the carrot family with similar size, habitat, and bloom-time have different characteristics like hairy stems (e.g., wild chervil) or entirely purple stems (e.g., angelica).



Think you've found invasive poison hemlock? Let us know!

Send a report (date, photographs, + location) with the GLEDN app or email WIFDNcoordinator@gmail.com





Penstemon digitalis blooming at County Park. *Photo submitted by Eric Kropp.*

The unique pollination systems of cucumbers, melons, and squash

June 18, 2020

Natalie Hoidal, UMN Extension Educator

You've likely all seen the images of what grocery store shelves would look like without pollinators. While many fruit and vegetable crops require pollinators to set fruit, cucumbers, melons, squash,

and other plants in the cucurbit family have one of the most complex pollination systems of any garden vegetable. This article covers some basic information about the complex and very cool pollination systems of cucurbits.

Flowering dynamics

Pumpkins, squash, cucumbers, and melons are monoecious, meaning they produce both "male" and "female" flowers on the same plant. However, these flowers emerge at different times. In general, male flowers bloom one week or so before female flowers. However in zucchini and summer squash, female flowers tend to bloom first.

In zucchini and summer squash, early female flowers will sometimes produce a fruit without the pollen of a male flower; this is why we sometimes see very small or oddly shaped fruit early in the season.

In a perfect world, pollinators would visit the male flowers to pick up pollen, then visit female flowers to deposit it. However, the world is rarely perfect, and pollination doesn't always work out this way.



Image: Natalie Hoidal

Sensitive flowers

Cucurbits have very sensitive flowers. Most squash and pumpkin flowers only last for about four hours, so conditions have to be just right for pollination. Conditions like high temperatures can cause the plants to produce only male or only female flowers. Drought tends to result in more male flowers. Heat and drought, and also too much water can also simply cause the flowers to die, or to wilt even more quickly than their already short blooming period. In these scenarios,

pollinators may not be able to reach the plants in time, or if they do, they may not be able to effectively transfer pollen from plant to plant.

A specialist pollinator

While cucurbits can be pollinated by any insect pollinator, they are most frequently pollinated by bumblebees and squash bees, which forage in the morning when flowers are open. The squash bee in particular is a very special insect. Squash bees (*Peponapis pruinosa*) co-evolved with cucurbits, and so their life cycles are perfectly aligned. They come out in the summer around the time that cucurbits are flowering, and have adapted their feeding habits based on the flowering systems of these crops. In order to encourage squash bees and bumblebees in your garden, try to limit the amount of tilling and digging you're doing around your garden, and leave some bare soil areas for nesting. Growing flowers all summer long is also a great way to support bumblebees in your garden.

Even in a perfect garden setting with plenty of bee habitat and resources, we still sometimes see limited pollination in cucurbits. Extreme heat and heavy rain can cause pollinators to "stay inside", or to seek shelter. Given the short life cycles of cucurbit flowers, bad weather can mean that a flower doesn't get pollinated at all.



Squash bee, Susan Ellis, Bugwood

Additional resource: [Vine Crop Pollination by Dr. Marla Spivak, U of MN](#)



Clematis. Photo submitted by Anne Murphy.

WCMGA Projects	
<i>Check your Member Guide for contact information.</i>	
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	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	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	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.

July 2020						
Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
			1	2	3	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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