

Winnebago County Master Gardeners

Newsletter

March 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.

“The **GARDEN** is a
mirror of the
HEART.”



A fallen mighty Burr Oak at Sheldon Nature Center Oshkosh. Picture by Kathy Schultz.

What am I?

By Jane Kuhn

I am a deciduous hybrid fern that is noted for its upright silvery foliage. I grow to 30 inches tall and 24 inches wide in zones 4-8, prefer part to full shade, and sandy or clay soil with medium moisture. I grow into slowly spreading clumps of fronds that are a soft grayish-green with an overlay of silvery hues and dark maroon midribs. Silvering is best in the spring and in the shade with fronds becoming more grayish-green in too much sun or hot temperatures. My silvery fronds are a striking contrast to blue and green leaved plants. Leaves of my plant should be trimmed to the ground in late fall or early spring.

I spread by shallow rhizomes and can be propagated by division in spring. I can be used as a specimen or in mass, in the woodland, waterside, as a border and in containers. I attract butterflies but am deer and rabbit resistant. I 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. Thank you!

Letter from your Presidents: Linda Loker & Kathy Schultz

Spring makes its own statement, so loud and clear that the gardener seems to be only one of his instruments, not the composer.

Geoffrey Charlesworth

March is now upon us and spring is around the corner, right? We are not quite sure ... we think the Leprechauns will have a hard time running through the meadow with their short legs and all the snow we have had! While we are happy to have all this moisture for our upcoming seasons, all the snow blowing, shoveling and scraping is becoming a bit much! (We do admit, though, we like the winter wonderland!)

First off, we can congratulate ourselves on another successful Winter Escape ~ Summer Dreams. The Education Committee pulled off another wonderful day. Over 160 garden enthusiasts participated, and the speakers were wisely chosen and thoroughly enjoyed! The raffle was also well done. It takes many hands to organize an event such as this. Thank you to everyone who helped make this a great day! We thank **Cindy Meszaros** for her work on updating the Master Gardener boards that depict our members in the group's projects. The boards tell so much of our story. Take time to look at them when they are available - we may have them displayed at the March business meeting. We also sponsored a bus to WPT Garden Expo the beginning of February. Those in attendance experienced an educational and fun day! Comments from first timers at both of these events were so positive, and all said that they will be partaking in these events next year!

Check out the newsletter for updates on the workshops coming up this month and in June. The Project Lead meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 19 at the Coughlin Center. Members who are leading the projects should have received an email regarding this. Hopefully you will be able to attend, as there is important information that **Britton Dake**, our new Vice President, will be sharing with you.

And speaking of the projects, the leads will be on hand at the March business meeting so that all members will be able to browse the tables and ask questions about the various projects. We tried this last year and it was well received. Again, it is our goal that each member will be able to find an interesting area in which to volunteer. The projects are also listed on our hours sheets - 24 volunteer hours and 10 hours of education hours are needed each year to maintain certification as a master gardener. The hours are broken down in our Standard Operating Procedures (can be found on our website) into 3 categories: Support (what I did), Community (what I taught others) and Education (what I learned).

Our speaker for the March Business Meeting will be another of our own, **Susan Forbes**. She will be sharing her information on "Using Natives to Attract and Help Birds". Susan is also a member of the Wild Ones group in our area.

Happy "Wearin' o' the Green"

Kathy and Linda



WESD 2019

Photos by Kim Willman



LifeLong Gardening speakers, Marilyn Cech and Cindy Lindstedt demonstrating a cut and hold pruner and raking method at WESD 2019. Pictures submitted by Kathy Schultz.



My Perspective by Lynn Slat

Just as everyone is tiring of winter,

On February 16, 2019 - The MGV's of Winnebago Co. allowed us to leave winter behind and dream of summer- even if it was just for a while. The event was held from 8:00 AM to 3:30 PM, at LaSure's Banquet Hall. Three humorous speakers held our attention throughout. We enjoyed a continental breakfast and midway through, a delicious lunch. A raffle was held to have its winners picked at the end of the day.

The first speaker was Jeff Epping, the director of Horticulture for the Olbrich Botanical Gardens. He talked about "Sustainable Gardens: Designs and Plants for Greener Gardens." This was all about different locations of gardens, both botanical and personal. He noted that he was trying a new method of gardening that involves multiple low-lying grasses. These grasses give the impression of a lawn, without having to mow as often.

Then "Barks, Berries, Grasses and Beyond," Jeff went through many pictures to demonstrate barks that were unusual and attractive, as well as unusual berries/ trees and bushes that were something to consider, especially in those "off"-times your garden may suffer through.

Marilynn Cech & Cindy Lindstedt- are SE WI Master Garden Volunteers, who talked about "Lifelong Gardening." The lecture began with stretching exercises to do prior to gardening and then they demonstrated their favorite tools to use in the garden.

Amanda Thomsen an author and blogger of "150 Ways to Create a Fantastic Yard Totally Tailored for You," showed us gardens that were a little on the odd and flamboyant side. One picture had so many objects in it that it was hard to see where the garden was. There was one of gnomes of all shapes and sizes, very strange. She seemed to have so many examples of what *not* to do in your garden. You really wondered where they all came from.

At last, the raffle for the auction, thrilling those who won prizes of all sorts and sizes.

Extreme Cold Weather Brings Some Good

By Lawanda Jungwirth

The extended bout of cold weather this winter had many people grumbling and complaining. Lengthy extreme cold does bring good news though.

Lee Frelich, Director of the Center for Forest Ecology at the University of Minnesota says that extended sub-zero temperatures can kill the larvae of emerald ash borer, the insect that is decimating ash trees throughout the Midwest. The larvae overwinter in the bark of ash trees, which does give them some protection, between 2° and 7° F. warmer than the surrounding air. However, the longer the temperature remains low, the less the insulating effect of bark. A study by the Minnesota Forest Service showed that 5% of emerald ash borer larvae die at 0° F, 34% at -10°F, 79% at -20°F and 98% at -30F. While this is great news, remember that while the cold may knock back the emerald ash borer population significantly this winter, it won't completely wipe out the population since some of the larvae will be under bark that is protected by an insulating snow layer and others will be on the south sides of trees which may retain the sun's warmth.

Another insect pest whose population that is negatively affected by the cold weather is gypsy moth. Egg masses are laid on the outside of tree bark or other objects so they are exposed directly to the cold air. Gypsy moth eggs die at -20 F.

Along with the effect on insects, cold weather also affects plants, but in a good way. Cold winter temperatures are necessary for many of our beloved plants to thrive. Many native spring woodland ephemerals, prairie plants and favorites from your perennial bed wouldn't survive or else wouldn't bloom without experiencing winter.

In the wild, seeds that are shed in fall spend the winter atop or just under the soil. They are dormant over winter but their hard seed coats are softened by frost and moisture. In spring, the seeds' embryos begin to grow and are able break through the softened seed coats.

Bulb plants like tulips, hyacinths, crocuses, daffodils, muscari and snowdrops need 12-16 weeks of cold in order to grow and bloom the following spring. These plants go entirely dormant over summer once they finish their spring show. Then, when temperatures begin to cool, a natural biochemical process breaks down starches and carbohydrates stored in the bulbs and changes them into glucose. The glucose acts like an anti-freeze over the winter and then in spring provides the energy for the bulbs to grow and flower.

Probably the plant most missed by northerners who move south to escape winter is the lilac. While lilacs can withstand very hot temperatures – as hard as it is to imagine today, it does get over 100° F here occasionally – they can't withstand a long duration of extremely hot temperatures and they need a long, cold winter to thrive.

So bundle up and give thanks for winter. Come spring you'll appreciate it even more!

Use Caution When Ordering Plants and Seeds

By Lawanda Jungwirth

Seed catalogs began arriving in mailboxes several weeks ago. If you're like most people, you tend to be loyal to one or two mail order nursery companies, but do you know where your loyalty actually lies? Many seed companies that appear independent are actually owned by other larger companies that may own more than a dozen other companies.

Check the return address on the catalogs you receive and you may be surprised that many of them are coming from the same place. Here is a website that will tell you who owns what: <https://davesgarden.com/products/gwd/whoownswhat.php>.

You can search for a company in the "Search Garden Watchdog" box or just scroll down the list of companies. Clicking on individual company names will get you the company's address, phone, a link to their website and other information. Also very helpful, there are reviews of each company's products and customer service, which should always be checked before making a purchase. If you don't find a company listed, that means that they are neither owned by another company nor do they own additional companies besides the one with which you are familiar.

Just because a mail order catalog arrives in your mailbox, it doesn't mean that everything inside it will grow successfully on your property. In the case of trees, shrubs and perennial plants, check to be sure that they will survive in our USDA hardiness zone, which is 4 or 5 depending on your property's microclimate. Anything rated with a higher USDA hardiness zone number will not survive.

In the same vein, our Wisconsin growing season is not long enough for some of the seeds in the catalogs to complete their life cycles and produce vegetables, fruit or flowers before autumn frost. Vegetable seeds like tomatoes and peppers, for example, must be started indoors and then planted outdoors when weather permits.

Also be sure that your light, soil moisture and soil type conditions match up to what the plant you are considering requires. Mail order catalogs tell whether a plant requires full sun, part shade or full shade. They may or may not list water requirements and preferred soil conditions, so do some research on your own before investing in plants.

Even if you've checked everything out, there is still no guarantee that a plant will thrive once you plant it, so before you order, check to see if the company offers any kind of guarantee. Sometimes plants just don't work out and the reason is a mystery. For example, I grew lavender successfully for many years in perfectly awful soil at my prior house but at my current house, my different perfectly awful soil won't support lavender for even a single season. I have no idea why.

Finally, be wary of buying plants that claim "No pests! Easy care! Fast growing!" These may be warning signs that a plant is invasive. Check Wisconsin DNR's list of invasive species to avoid planting something you shouldn't: <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/invasives/classification.html>

Mark your calendars for these exciting Master Gardener training and trip opportunities!

WCMGA Morning Workshop Program, March 9

Join us at the Coughlin Center Saturday, March 9, from 9am to noon, to hear Mark Konlock from the Green Bay Botanical Garden present on “Holistic Landscape Design: Considering Nature When Choosing Plants” and Max Martin from the USDA Potato Gene Bank in Sturgeon Bay who will discuss “Potatoes: From the USDA Potato Genebank to the Dinner Table.” \$5 in advance, \$10 at the door. (2.5 hours of continuing education) Full details, registration at:

[Registration](#)

WCMGA 6-day Trip to the Great Gardens of Philadelphia, May 5-10

This trip has a deposit/reservation deadline of March 1 so review the details and make a decision soon! Only 30 seats are available.

Gardens included are: Philadelphia City Center, Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square, the gardens of Winterthur and Mt. Cuba, the Morris Arboretum and Chanticleer.

[Information and Registration](#)

For more information: All of these programs are on the [WCMGA website](#) with links, under “Classes, Seminars, Trips”



Need Education Hours?

Upcoming Paine Art Center and Gardens Educational Presentations of interest for MGs for educational hours, all held at 1:00 PM in the Conservatory:

March 4: Bill Sturm, Landscape Director and Forester for the City of Oshkosh

April 1: WORMS! presenter, Bernie Williams (DNR)

June 24: Annual Garden Tour, Sheila Glaske

DAY IN THE GARDEN – Sat., April 6, 2019

UW Fond du Lac, 400 University Drive, Fond du Lac, WI

Celebrate the coming of Spring! While we are waiting for Spring, the Fond du Lac County Master Gardener Association is bringing it to you early at our annual **Day In The Garden** event. Enjoy speakers who will share information on diverse topics.

- Susan Steinhafel – “The Versatility of Herbs”
- Benjamin Futa - “Planting Design with Perennials” and “Brown is a Color Too”
- Dr. David Drake – “Healthy Cities for Humans and Wildlife”

In addition to great speakers; the day includes lunch, snacks, and door prizes. Visit our new FDL Co Master Gardener Shop, browse vendor booths, the raffle and have an enjoyable time visiting with others who enjoy gardening. An Early Bird registration discount is available. Invite a friend and join us! A complete itinerary and Registration Form is available at: <https://bit.ly/2WPfbP8>

Member Business Meeting Minutes - Feb. 12, 2019

Meeting was cancelled because of bad weather.

Upcoming Events - See Calendar for March Events

April 1: Paine Art Center Presentation, WORMS!, Bernie Williams 1 PM

April 16: Education Committee, Benvenuto's 5:30 PM

May 5-10: Philadelphia Trip

May 21: Education Committee, Benvenuto's 5:30 PM

June 8: Willow Creek Iris trip - leaf casting class

June 17-21, 2019: International Master Gardener Conference, Valley Forge, PA

June 24: Paine Art Center Presentation, Annual Garden Tour, Sheila Glaske 1 PM

Cold snap highlights risks to agriculture of extreme weather

Cornell providing farmers with tools to manage risk

By Ben Rand *January 10, 2018*

Submitted by Lynne Slat

New technology developed at Cornell CALS is giving farmers new capabilities to respond to climate risks. Winter has started with the heart of a lion, marked by an extended period of frigid temperatures and a recent storm that produced dangerously low wind chills, high winds and blizzard conditions.

The blast of Arctic air elevates the risk of damage to certain crops, even if those crops are planted in areas where they are already adapted to the local climate. At the same time, recent fluctuations in temperatures highlight the ever-growing importance of precise data for better decision-support on the farm. If farmers have more accurate advance notice of the risk of freeze relevant to their particular crop's hardiness, they can take preventative actions to prevent losses. New technology in the age of big data is providing these new capabilities.

The [Cornell Climate Smart Farming Program](#) has developed a website and suite of climate-based agricultural decision support tools aimed at helping farmers make more informed decisions in the face of increasing climate change and uncertainty. Specific tools were developed based on the major climate impacts to northeastern U.S. agriculture, through a collaborative development process with stakeholders, researchers, and faculty from the [Northeast Regional Climate Center](#) at Cornell University.

These free tools provide data covering conditions affecting farms in the northeastern United States. Farmers enter their exact farm location into the map interface, along with crop specific information. The models then will provide relevant information to improve decision-making. Two tools were specifically developed to help farmers manage the risk of freeze damage to crops, especially after warmer periods of weather: the CSF Apple Freeze Damage Probability tool, and the Grape Hardiness and Freeze Risk tool.

The apple freeze tool, for example, allows producers to chart observed and forecasted daily minimum temperatures as compared to apple hardiness thresholds to order to assess potential risk for freeze damage.

The application also produces a graph of the conditions over the entire season, as well as a 6-day forecast. Daily temperatures are calculated using 2.5 x 2.5-mile gridded data using a variety of



National Weather Service observations and model data, allowing for temperature estimates at locations without a nearby on-farm weather station. In terms of current conditions, air temperatures are a long way from posing the risk of widespread damage to fruits grown above ground, said Mario Miranda Sazo of the Cornell Cooperative Extension Lake Ontario Tree Fruit Program. Apple flower buds will typically die off at temperatures between minus-25 to minus-32 degrees Fahrenheit, Sazo said. "The forecasted cold temperatures will

probably not have a negative effect on mature apple trees but may affect some young or weak apple trees," he said.

At the same time, a current snow cover of 2-3 inches in depth is enough to protect root systems from winter damage. However, he said "It would be wise to delay the pruning of apple trees until more normal winter temperatures are experienced in our region." Lower thresholds exist for other fruits: peach flower buds are at risk at minus-12 to -20 degrees; plums at minus-2 to minus-25 degrees, with Japanese plums more sensitive. "There will likely be some flower bud damage to a small proportion of peach, plum, and cherries," Sazo said.

In addition to tools for freeze damage probability, the Climate Smart Farming program offers applications that monitor drought conditions, provide growing degree day accumulation forecasts, assist in cover crop selection, and other decision supports relevant to farming success in a changing climate.

The Cornell Climate Smart Farming program is a voluntary initiative that helps farmers in New York and the Northeastern U.S. increase farm resilience to extreme weather and climate variability; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and increase agricultural productivity and farming incomes sustainably. A team of Climate Smart Farming Extension specialists can help farmers with questions related to best management practices to address extreme cold, precipitation, drought, or other climate impacts.

<https://cals.cornell.edu/news/cold-snap-highlights-risks-agriculture-extreme-weather/>

Ask a Plant Health Advisor _____

Submitted by Valerie Stabenow

What's Wrong with My Cherry Tree?



Now that the leaves are all off our deciduous trees, it provides us with an opportunity to examine the tree for possible pruning as well as signs of disease. Both of these occurred this past fall with our Ornamental Cherry.

What we look for are knobby black growths, called galls and in this case, it is Black Knot. The galls form on branches and sometimes on trunks. Black Knot is a common fungal disease of *Prunus* trees and include ornamental, edible and native plum and cherry trees. While most *Prunus* will tolerate Black Knot, a few varieties will suffer - leaves and shoots will wilt and die. On the Black Knot tolerant trees, the leaves will remain green and appear healthy. You will see wilted, browned and dead leaves on varieties that are highly susceptible to the fungus. Black Knot areas on trunks will be rough,

swollen, black and ooze a sticky liquid. The fungi enter by attaching to the liquid as well as entering through the cracks created by the galls.

How to Manage Black Knot:

If you already are aware of a Black Knot infection, don't plant any additional, susceptible trees. Prune the affected trees or remove them completely. Choose varieties that are resistant to Black Knot. Inspect new trees carefully before planting for any evidence of pre-existing Black Knot infection.

Pruning out the Black Knot: Pruning is best done in late February through early March when temperatures are below freezing. This keeps the spores from infecting the cut area.

Make the pruning cut at least 4 inches below the infected area. Be sure to use sanitized cutting implements and re-sanitize the tool after each cut (alcohol solution) to prevent spread of the spores and infection. All cut pieces need to be burned or buried. Other disposal methods such as compost piles or landfills will possibly allow the spores to spread.

Use of Fungicides: Fungicides must be used in spring, AFTER all existing galls have been pruned out of the affected tree. Begin the spraying when the flowers are just starting to come out. Repeat the spray treatments until the shoots and leaves are mature or the weather is consistently warm and dry. The spray will work best at 60 degrees and before a rain or heavy dew.

Read the label carefully. If the tree is NOT listed on the fungicide label, then that fungicide CANNOT be used on that tree. Fungicides for use on ornamentals may not be for use on edibles.

Captan, Chlorothalonil, Thiophanate-methyl and lime Sulphur are the active ingredients to look for when choosing a fungicide. Read and follow ALL label directions, including those for eye/skin/respiratory protection when using the chemical: THE LABEL IS THE LAW.

Photo courtesy of Ohio State Extension

Answer to What am I?

By Jane Kuhn



I am Ghost lady fern. Order: Polypodiales. Family: Woodsiaceae. Genus: Athyrium. Scientific name: athyrium x ghost. Common name: Ghost lady Fern. This plant is a hybrid between Japanese painted fern and Southern lady fern. "Ghost" is distinctive enough to stand on its own as a specimen planting or as a luminous ribbon of light in the shade. This plant can be found in the rain garden at the Coughlin Center.

References: USDA Plants Database and associated links.

FVTC Horticulture Department

“Take A Class”

Class	Date	Time	Location
Best Trees for our Area	Tuesday March 26	6:00PM-8:00PM	Appleton
Landscape Maintenance Basic Principles	Thursday March 28 and April 4	6:00PM-8:00PM	Appleton
Best Shrubs for our Area	Tuesday April 2	6:00PM-8:00PM	Appleton
Design Your Home Landscape	Wednesdays April 3 to 17	6:00PM-8:00PM	Appleton
Best Perennials in our Area	Tuesday April 9	6:00PM-8:00PM	Appleton
Basic Gardening for Everyone and Every Space	Tuesdays April 23 to May 14	5:30PM-7:30PM	Waupaca
	Or Fridays May 3 to May 10	9:00AM-1:00PM	Waupaca
Container Gardening & Beyond- 3 HR	Monday May 6	5:30PM-8:30PM	Wautoma
	Tuesday May 7	5:30PM-8:30PM	Clintonville
	Thursday May 9	5:30PM-8:30PM	Waupaca

To register or for more information - [FVTC.edu](http://fvtc.edu)

WCMGA Projects

Check your Member Guide for contact information.

Project	Project Lead(s)
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
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.

March 2019

Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
					1	2
3	4 Paine Art Center. presentation 1 PM Bill Sturm, Landscape Director and Forester - Oshkosh	5 Board Meeting 6:00	6	7	8	9 WCMG Morning Workshop 9 am - Noon
10	11	12 Business Meeting 6:00	13	14	15	16
17	18	19 Education Committee, Benvenuto's 5:30 PM Lead Training 6 PM	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

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