



# Winnebago County Master Gardeners

## Newsletter

March 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.

“Let go of your tired habits and plant new habits in fertile soil.”



Amaryllis, picture by Valerie Stabenow

## What am I?

By Jane Kuhn

I am a native, deciduous shrub which grows to a height and width of 36 inches and prefers full sun or partial shade in zones 4-8. My native range is eastern and central North America. I grow in loam, sand or shallow/rocky soil that is moist or occasionally dry and has good drainage. I am drought tolerant once well established. My glossy leaves are edible and fragrant as well as durable. My long-lasting, white or creamy colored, fragrant flowers bloom in spring to early summer

Propagation of my plant is with seeds, semi-hardwood cuttings or softwood cuttings. My native habitat is open, deciduous woods, woodland edges, oak savannas and meadows. Because of my deep root system, I am used in erosion control on slopes but this also makes my plant difficult to transplant. I am also used as a specimen, in shrub borders, in pollinator gardens and in native plantings. I attract butterflies, hummingbirds, bees and songbirds. I am deer and drought resistant and tolerate black walnut.

## 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](mailto:pakster0605@yahoo.com). Thank you!

**SAVE THE DATE! JUNE 9, 2020 @ 6:00 P.M.**

**WINNEBAGO COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ANNUAL PICNIC**

**GREAT ROOM AT PARK VIEW HEALTH CENTER**

**More information to follow.**

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

Yes! Spring is here early! Regardless of the predictions of Punxsutawney Phil or Wisconsin's Gordy the groundhog, spring arrives early. Well, technically this is true since the official first day of spring in 2020 is March 19. As you know spring begins with the **vernal equinox**, which always occurs on either March 19, 20, or 21.

St. Patrick's Day, celebrated annually by the Irish on March 17, occurs two to three days before the vernal equinox. A Feast Day honoring St. Patrick started in 1631. He is the Patron Saint of Ireland who had died around the fifth century—a whopping 12 centuries before the modern version of the holiday was first observed. A well-known legend (this is where the horticulture part fits) is that he used the three leaves of a native Irish clover, the shamrock, as a teaching aid.

The Education Committee's Winter Escape~Summer Dreams event was again highly successful. It was an enjoyable learning and networking event. The education committee did a great job organizing and conducting the training.

[Native Plants in Urban Gardens](#) is an educational event held at the Coughlin Center Saturday on March 28, 2020, 9 am – 12 pm. This will be a fascinating look at the use of native perennials in your garden. Cost: \$5 in advance. \$10 at the door. More information is available on the WCMGA web site or follow the Native Plants in Urban Gardens link above.

The March Business Meeting includes speaker William Nettelhorst; he will present about lasagna gardening.

Spring is a good time to think about our volunteer hours. To help decide how to obtain these hours, tables will be set up at the business meetings in March and April for the project leads to talk about their projects. They are looking to the membership for help.

At the April business meeting, Mike Maddox will present about teams, alignment, decisions, and relationships. It will be good to hear directly from Mike and to be able to ask questions.

Ed Dombrowski

Bob Kneepkens

## Raspberries and Blackberries Chosen Herb of the Year

By Lawanda Jungwirth



The International Herb Association has made a rather unusual choice for their 2020 Herb of the Year. Instead of what we typically consider herbs – basil, lavender, oregano, thyme, etc. – raspberries and blackberries have been given this year's honor. And that's not all. The entire *Rubus* species, which numbers in the hundreds, is included. So also receiving the tribute are boysenberries, thimbleberries, loganberries, black raspberries, marionberries, dewberries, [tayberries](#), wineberries, cloudberrries, [salmonberries](#) and many more, some of which are not winter hardy in Wisconsin.

Plants in the species *Rubus* are known as bramble fruits or cane fruits. Obviously, I can't fit information on each of these plants in this column space, or do justice to even one of them, but here's an introduction to raspberries.

Raspberries are perennial plants, and the roots and crowns live below ground for years. The above-ground parts, the canes, live for only two years.

Raspberries are classified as either summer-bearing or fall-bearing. Summer-bearing raspberry canes produce only leaves their first year. The second year, the canes flower and bear fruit, and then die back. In contrast, fall-bearing raspberry canes bear fruit the first autumn and then a small crop the next summer before dying back. New canes sprout from the below-ground crowns each year so there is always a mix of first- and second-year canes in a raspberry patch.

Raspberries need a sunny spot in well-drained, slightly acid soil. They need to be well irrigated though, especially in sandy soils. The area should be kept free of weeds.

Purchase dormant raspberry crowns from a reputable nursery in spring. You'll likely receive a clump of roots with a cane or two that may or may not have started to produce leaves depending on when you buy. Set the plants in a hole slightly deeper than they were originally grown. You should be able to determine this by looking closely at the cane. Gently spread the roots out, pack the soil firmly around them, and water well.

People are often confused about how and when to prune raspberries, but it's really quite simple. Use a hand pruner to snip canes as close as you can to ground level after they fruit their second year. You can tell which canes produced fruit by looking at them. Those that have fruited are woody in appearance while first-year canes are still green.

A second pruning is done in winter when the canes are dormant. Often first-year canes have grown way too tall and unruly. Cut the tips back by one-fourth to one-third. Only a small amount of crop will be lost by doing this and the pruning will stiffen the canes and result in more fruit growth lower on the stems.

For everything you need to know about [growing raspberries in Wisconsin](#), use the link to the Learning Store.



## Black Knot

Black knot is a fungal disease affecting trees and shrubs in the genus *Prunus*. Black knot is characterized by dark brown or black galls which may vary in size from ½ inch to not more than 12 inches in length on the branches of cultivated and wild plum, prune and cherry trees. It is caused by the fungus, *Apiosporina morbosa*.

The galls develop very slowly and infection may not be evident until the second year. The fungus overwinters in the knots. As the temperature rises in the spring to 55-75°F and the rains come, the infection spreads. The fungal spores are spread by air currents and rain splashing. It is easy to see how the infection spread in a tree like this *Prunus virginiana*, 'Canada Red' chokecherry.



Winter is a great time to inspect *Prunus* trees for evidence of black knot infection. Before April 1, prune infected branches six to eight inches below each gall. It is very important to disinfect pruning tools between each cut, as the fungus could be lurking in tissues that appear to be uninfected. To disinfect, place cutting surfaces in solutions of 10% bleach/90% water or 70% alcohol/30% water (rubbing alcohol) for 30 seconds. Branches should then be burned or buried. Don't allow the cut branches to linger at the site, as the spores can be released for some time after removal from the tree. Infected trees decline and develop more symptoms each year. The stress on the tree may make it more susceptible to other diseases. Fungicide treatments are not effective.

When purchasing new trees of the genus *Prunus*, inspect them for evidence of black knot infection. Some black knot resistant varieties include, [Prunus 'Accolade'](#), [Prunus sargentii](#), and [Prunus maackii](#).

### Soil Testing

Healthy soil helps create healthy plants. A soil test is recommended to assess your garden's fertility. You should consider sampling your soil every 3-4 years or whenever your plants are showing signs of nutrient deficiency. It is suggested to sample your soil in early spring or late fall so you have the results when planting season starts. Generally it takes about 2 weeks to get the results of soil sample testing. Soil samples tested in Wisconsin typically will include results for soil pH, organic matter, phosphorus and potassium (potash). It also includes information regarding additions to garden soil with amendments and fertilizers. Testing for soil contaminants can also be done and should be considered in some situations. Lead contamination is a common soil contaminant of soils in urban environments. If you garden or are planning a garden near a home built prior to 1979 or near major roadways review the information on [Lead in the Home Garden \(A4089\)](#) available at The Learning Store.

The samples you collect should be done for each distinct sampling area of your yard or garden. This would mean to sample gardens and lawns separately. This could mean sampling different gardens separately (annual, perennial, vegetable) It could mean sampling separately different areas of your lawn that grow differently.

The process of collecting a sample for established gardens and lawns:

1. From each area to be sampled separately, remove any overlying mulch, compost or sod. Soil samples should be collected from the top 5-7 inches of soil.

Collect approximately one cup of soil with a clean trowel or shovel at four random locations and ten random locations if using a soil probe.

2. Place the four or ten soil samples collected from a distinct sampling area into a clean plastic container and mix those samples together thoroughly. Samples from different areas should not be mixed together. Remember, the sample should only contain soil and no organic matter (you want to test the soil, not the mulch or sod).

3. One cup of soil from each area to be analyzed should be placed in a heavy duty plastic or soil sample bag for analysis.

4. Label the bag with your name and contact information and send it to a soil lab.

5. Repeat this procedure for each distinct sampling area or your yard or garden.

6. Complete form and send form and sample and payment to: Soil & Forage Analysis Lab 2611 Yellowstone Dr. Marshfield WI 54449

The soil is the foundation for what you grow. Do not guess—Soil Test!

For additional information including form for soil testing go to the [UW Soils Lab](#) website.

Publications on this topic available at The Learning Store:

[Sampling Lawn and Garden Soils for Analysis \(A2166\)](#)

[Garden Fertilization \(A2304\)](#)

References: Master Gardener Foundations in Horticulture A4055

## Answer to What am I?

By Jane Kuhn

I am New Jersey tea. Order: Rhamnales. Family: Rhamnaceae – Buckthorn family. Genus: *Ceanothus* L. – *ceanothus*. Species: *Ceanothus americanus* L. – New Jersey tea. Common names: [New Jersey tea](#), Mountain Snowbell, Redroot. My genus name comes from *keanothos* which is an ancient Greek name relating to some plants in the buckthorn family. This plant was used by Native Americans as a tea to treat respiratory tract infections. The dried leaves made an excellent tea in American Revolutionary War times, hence the common name. I can be found in the rain garden adjacent to the Coughlin Center.



References: [USDA Plants Database](#) and associated links.



**Dr. Bill Weber** was recently honored by Park View for over thirty years of service there (GARDENS AND OTHER). Way to go Dr. Weber! Pictured submitted by Jane Kuhn.

# Member Business Meeting Minutes - Feb. 11, 2020

Call to order 6:57 P.M.

**Treasurer Report:** **Deby** gave the cash reconciliation report for the period of January 2020.

**Secretary Report:** Board minutes are on the website. Member meeting minutes are in the newsletter.

**Projects Updates:** **Britton** reported that there will be a Project Lead meeting on March 25th. There will be an informational Project sign up and displays in the Volunteer room for all members at the March and April membership meetings.

**Extension Report:** **Bob Kneepkens** reported that the membership enrollment was very successful.

**Education Committee Report:** **Linda Werner** reported that WE~SD admission is discounted from \$50. to \$45. February 4-H Fun Day had 9 attendees. There will be a native's workshop on March 28, Stone Silo and Lorus Damerow from Wild Ones will be presenting. Forty-nine people went to the Madison Garden Expo and had many opportunities to earn education credits. Next Wednesday there is a program for the Youth Brigade about forcing flowering bulbs

**State Representatives Report:** No report

## New Business

**Goals Reserve Funds Committee Update:** **Sandra Gollhofer** reported that she and **Ginny Slattery** presented the Committee's proposal to the Board in November. The Board approved the goal of Building Sustainable Ecosystems and that the focus to reach this goal be "Natives". Next the Committee meeting will discuss means to reach this goal. The committee members are **Patti Schmitz, Mary Shepard, Al Stabenow, Bob Kosanke, Anne Murphy, Ginny Slattery, and Sandra Gollhofer.**

**Other Business:** **Sandra Gollhofer** is the new June Picnic lead. There is a survey on the bottom of the February Business Agenda to determine: Agenda format and door prizes.

**Sue Egner** reported that preparation for obtaining and selling worm castings is starting. Materials are being reviewed and organized. Last year over 800 lbs of casting were bought.

## Drawings for door prizes

**Adjourn:** 7:12 P.M.





## Winter Escape~Summer Dreams 2020

Speakers Ben Futa, Anita Carpenter and Jim Nienhuis  
Pictures by Kim Willman



---

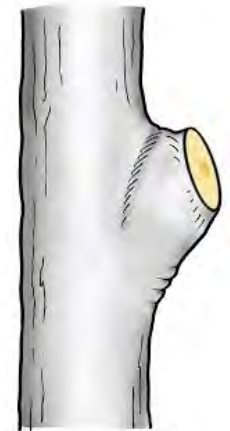
## Smart Garden 2020: It's time to ...

February 14, 2020

-- Julie Weisenhorn, University of Minnesota Extension, Extension Educator, Horticulture

### Prune trees

- Trees to prune now: Oaks, apple, crabapple, maple, birch, honeylocust, showy mountain ash, hawthorne, butternut, walnut, ironwood, blue beech.
- Note some trees like birch, maple and walnut may drip sap from the cuts. That's ok - it's a natural occurrence.
- Tools for pruning: hand pruner, lopper, hand saw, pole saw, chainsaw. Tools with telescoping handles are handy for reaching branches in the canopy.
- Read more: [Pruning Trees and Shrubs](#)



### Start some seeds

- Start seeds that take a long time to germinate / grow to planting size: geraniums, pansies, wax begonias, leeks, onions, alpine strawberry, browallia, clarkia, dusty miller, fountain grass, impatiens, larkspur, lobelia, nemesia, stocks, torenia, celery.
- Use peat pots or other biodegradable pots for starting transplant-sensitive clarkia and nemesia. Rip off the bottoms of biodegradable pots and plant them right in the ground.
- Plant tubers like begonias in a flat of peat moss or vermiculite for bloom in June. Move plants you have been overwintering into a sunny window. Cut off dead leaves and stems. Repot if needed and start watering. Wait till fertilize until you see new growth emerge.
- Read more: [Starting Seeds Indoors](#). Watch a video: [Starting Seeds](#)

### Clean equipment and tools

- Pots and saucers: Clean off soil residue and wash in hot, soapy water, inside and out.
- Stakes, cages, small trellises, pruning tools: Use a rag or old towel, and wipe all surfaces with isopropyl or ethyl alcohol (70-100%). A 10% bleach solution is fine for non-metal items. Alcohol is better for metal as it won't cause rusting.
- Sharpen pruning tools with a sharpening stone, or have them professionally sharpened. Google "tool sharpening" for services in your area.
- Use a file to sharpen the blades of spades, shovels, trowels, garden forks, and other digging tools. Take this opportunity to inspect handles for cracks or splits, lose hardware and handles. Repair them now before you really need them!



### Beat the rush: Get a soil test done

Spring is a BUSY time for the U of MN Soil Testing Lab, so submitting a soil test can almost guarantee a quicker turn-around. Yes, there is still snow on the ground, but you may be able to collect a soil sample as the frost is not as deep in the ground this winter. Follow these guidelines for collecting a sample, filling out the form and sending it in: [Soil Testing Laboratory](#)

## Upcoming Events - See Calendar for March Events

April 21: Education Committee, Benvenuto's, 5:30 PM  
May 18: Flower Arranging, Park View Great Room, 1:30-3 PM  
May 19: Education Committee, Benvenuto's, 5:30 PM  
July 13: Flower Arranging, Park View Great Room, 1:30-3 PM  
Oct. 19: Flower Arranging, Park View Great Room, 1:30-3 PM

### Spring Orchid Show in Appleton

### Orchid Magic, March 7-8, 2020

Orchid Magic, the [Northeastern Wisconsin Orchid Society's](#) annual American Orchid Society judged show and sale is coming. It is open to the public and will be held at a new location this year, the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in Appleton. There will be presentations on orchids and orchid care. Bring your orchid to get it repotted for a small fee.

Visit the [NEWOS website](#) for the latest information or visit them on Facebook.

**General admission:** \$5.00 (children under 12 admitted free)

**Location:** DoubleTree by Hilton Appleton, 150 Nicolet Road, Appleton, WI. (From US Highway 41, take exit 137 – west on College Avenue [WI-125], south [left] on S. Nicolet Road, Appleton.)

**Hours:** Saturday, March 7th, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm  
Sunday, March 8th, 10:00 am - 3:30 pm

#### Vendors

Anything Orchids, <http://anythingorchids.com/> 815-469-3774  
Big Oak Orchids, <http://stores.ebay.com/Big-Oak-Orchids>, 920-450-9074  
Deerwood Orchids, [www.deerwoodorchids.com](http://www.deerwoodorchids.com)  
Sunset Valley Orchids, [www.sunsetvalleyorchids.com](http://www.sunsetvalleyorchids.com), 760-310-0778  
Rob Zimmer Outdoors, <https://www.facebook.com/RobZimmerOutdoors>

For additional information contact: davidkaye1@aol.com, 920-450-9074, davidbluma@aol.com, 920-428-4595 Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/NEWOchidSociety>

## 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	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.

March 2020						
Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
1	2	3 Board Mtg. 6 PM	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 Business Mtg. 6 PM	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 Education Committee, Benvenuto's 5:30 PM	18	19	20	21
22	23 Flower Arranging, 1:30-3 PM Park View Great Room	24	25	26	27	28 Native Plants in Urban Gardens 9-12 Coughlin Ctr.
29	30	31				

An EEO/AA employer, University of Wisconsin-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title VI, Title IX, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.