Winnebago County Master Gardeners Newsletter

November 2018

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*** is cheaper than therapy and you get tomatoes."

Picture by Linda Loker

What am I?

By Jane Kuhn

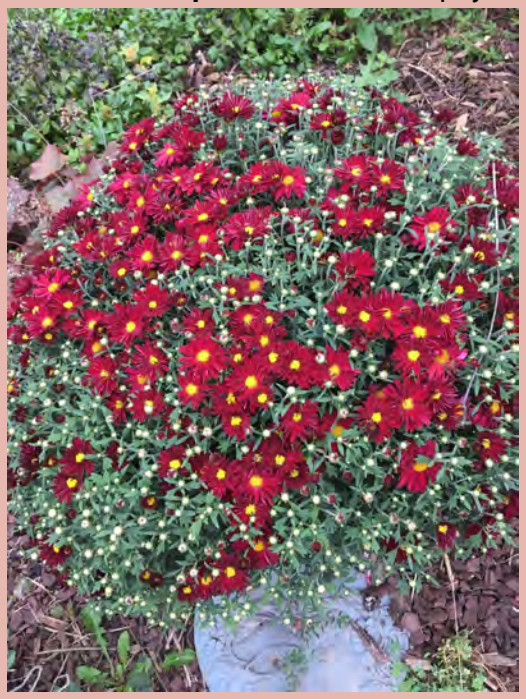
I am an herbaceous, perennial, low mounding wildflower that grows in zones 4-9 and has narrow, fine-textured foliage. My leaf blades are linear and about 3 inches long and 1/8 inch across with pointed tips. They are produced in abundance giving my plant a soft appearance and fine texture. I bloom in August and September with small clusters of royal purple disc florets. My color remains into October and flowers provide a late season nectar source for butterflies and bees. My plants are 2-3 feet tall with an equal spread and are anchored by a sturdy taproot. I prefer full sun and evenly moist, well-drained soil but will tolerate drought and temporary inundation by water.

Propagation is by plant division and transplanting in late fall or spring. My plants also self-sow. My pest and deer resistant plants can be used for naturalizing, wildflower gardens, cottage gardens, perennial borders and rain gardens. Beside bees and butterflies, I attract skippers, moths and hummingbirds. Cutting back my plant by ½ in midsummer will control my height.

WCMGA Contacts

Check your membership guide for contact information.

Co-Presidents:
Linda Loker & Kathy Schultz
Co-Vice Presidents:
Nancy Karuhn & Eric Kropp
Secretary: Ann Abraham
Treasurer: Joni Pagel
Advisor: Kimberly Miller
Newsletter Compilation: Anne Murphy



Picture by Anne Murphy

Letter from your Presidents: Linda Loker & Kathy Schultz

Hello November!
A cold spell came early this year, making us think about packing it all in for the season! Now we are definitely in the mood for fall clean up, providing the rain holds out so that we can get into our gardens! And hopefully we are finally rid of those mosquitoes for the year! Mother Nature has shown us a pretty display of color this fall so it is certainly enjoyable to be outside. Watch for emails from project leads needing your help with putting our community's gardens to bed, and this is the best time of year to tackle that nasty buckthorn!

November elections will be held at the business meeting on Tuesday November 13. Thank you to all who have expressed an interest to serve on the board. And for those still considering a position on the board, please let anyone on the nomination committee know as we will take nominations right up to the evening of Nov 13. Thank you to ***Ann Abraham*** *and* ***Diane Iott*** *for all your time and hard work!*

Save The Date! December 4 is our Awards Banquet. We had invitations at the October business meeting, and will have invitations available in the November newsletter as well as in an email to all of you. There will be no board or business meeting in December. Please consider joining your fellow members for an evening of fun...and thanks to Diana Dougherty and her team, wonderful prizes as well!

Our Education Committee is ready for the February 16, 2019 WESD seminar. Sign up information is forthcoming so be on the lookout for it. It sounds like another successful day of garden fun!

Our speaker for November will be Lindsay Bender, Chief Mycologist and Research Director for Field and Forest Products. We will be sharing her expertise on mushrooms.

November is our blessings month - one in which we give thanks for the bounty from the fruits of our labor. We also give thanks for the blessings of our families and our friends - some may be our master gardener friends, new and old. We certainly appreciate the dedication and support that the members of this organization offer to our community. The many projects and the number of hours volunteered are a true testament to all of our efforts. We are also thankful for our dedicated advisor, ***Kimberly****. With all of us working together, we are proud to be a great organization in Wisconsin!*

Happy Thanksgiving!

Kathy and Linda

Farmers Market 2018

It was another busy year at the Oshkosh Farm Market. Patty, Synda, Dorothy, and I enjoyed meeting new Master Gardeners and renewing friendships with others.

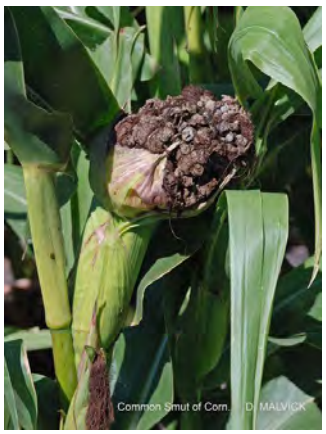
Kids Day is always a fun day. We assisted planting about 300 flowers with the soon-to-be gardeners. The children also enjoyed a craft.

We continued to answer garden questions and the number one question seems to be about tomatoes. It was a hot dry summer and this had an effect on gardens. We answered many question on the Jumping Worm and invasives.

Our season has changed with the first frost. Enjoy the season break and remember spring is just around the corner.

Kathy Gore, Patty Schmitz, Ruth Retzlaff, Synda Jones, Linda Christenson, Janet Priebe

Ask a Plant Health Advisor



What is happening with this corn?

Find the answer later in the newsletter.

Garden Trivia

- Did you know that an average ear of corn has 800 kernels in 16 rows?
- Each ear will have an EVEN number of rows.
- A bushel of corn can sweeten 400 cans of soda.
- Corn is produced on every continent except which one? *Antarctica*
- Wisconsin is in the "Corn Belt" along with what other states? *Iowa, Illinois, Nebraska, Minnesota, Indiana, Ohio, South Dakota, Michigan, Missouri, Kansas and Kentucky*

Jumping Worms

by Nancy Karuhn & Sue Egner, Co-Leads of Jumping Worm Committee

What is a Jumping Worm?

- Jumping worms are an invasive earthworm native to Eastern Asia.
- They were first confirmed in Wisconsin in 2013.
- Some of the ways they spread are through leaf litter, topsoil, compost, vehicle tires, garden tools and our shoes and gloves.

Worm Identification

Jumping Worm (Amynthas sp)

- Flop and wriggle vigorously when handled. When captured the jumping worm can shed its tails in defense.
- Clitellum (band) is white, smooth, flat, and closer to the head. Circles the body.
- Body is dark, gray in color.
- Reproduce rapidly – do not need to mate to generate multiple generations throughout the year. The cocoons are small and are not visible by eye.
- The jumping worm does not produced slime when handled like an earthworm.

European Earthworm (Lumbricus sp)

- Do not wriggle vigorously when handled
- Clitellum (band) is raised, ridged, and further from the head
- Body is paler, pink in color
- Reproduces more slowly – one generation per year
- Produces a slime when handled

What do we do if we find them on our project?

We begin working on our projects in April/May. The cocoon (eggs) will survive the winter and hatch when the soil warms up, approximately a soil temperature of 40 degrees.

- If you suspect you may have found jumping worms on your project, bring a worm(s) to the UW-Extension office so that Kimberly can make a positive identification. At this point we will need to evaluate the extent of the infestation and determine what steps will need to be taken.
- If you suspect you may have found them in your own garden, it is extremely important that you bring in a worm(s) for confirmation.

- A good test is to remove the leaf litter and mulch from around the plants in question. In a gallon of water mix three tablespoons of Dry Mustard. Pour the mixture into the soil and wait approximately five minutes. This mixture acts as an irritant and will cause worms and insects in the soil to surface. If necessary this process can be repeated.
- If you have a small amount of worms to dispose of, you can place them in a plastic bag and place them in the sun. The heat will kill them and then the bag can be placed in the garbage. You will probably never get all of them, but if we dispose of what we find it will help.

WCMGA Best Practices for Project: ARRIVE CLEAN, LEAVE CLEAN!!

- Clean soil and debris from gardening tools, shoes, gloves, etc. This needs to be done prior to arriving and before leaving the project.
- Check plants purchased from nurseries. Remove plants from the container and check the soil. You do not want to purchase if the soil looks like coffee grounds, or if there is an open area in the root ball. These are signs that jumping worm have been there and will have left cocoons in the soil.
- Home plant donations to the projects shall be accompanied with a Jumping Worm Certificate. It will be the Project Leads responsibility to obtain a completed certificate. The Jumping Worm Certificate will be submitted with the Project Leads year end reports. We are also discouraging the use of free mulch or compost. As with all invasive species the goal is to minimize their spread.

Additional information can be found at: https://hort.uwex.edu/jumping-worms/

Jumping Worm Certification

Project Name or event: _____

Project lead: _____

I confirm that I understand the process of looking for Jumping Worms and what to do if found. If any questions, please reach out to the Jumping Worm Committee, Plant Health Advisors or the Extension Advisor.

My soil tested positive for Jumping Worms. I understand that I CANNOT donate to any Master Gardener events.

I did not find any signs of Jumping Worms in the soil, from which I plan to do digs*. I understand, that I cannot donate any digs from soil that has not been tested. If you donate from more than one location in your yard, ALL locations must be tested.

I understand that all digs by me will be rinsed and sprayed free of any soil and potted using bagged potting soil mix or after washing off the roots, you can place it in a plastic bag or bucket of water no longer than overnight.

I understand that all soil testing and certification must be completed and submitted by Oct 31st of this year to donate flowers for the spring of next year. Donations for fall planting must be completed by July 31st of the same year.

*Digs include plants, bulbs and anything else removed from the soil.

By completing the information above you are certifying that you understand the process of identifying Jumping Worms and if found how to properly dispose of them. You acknowledge that any plants or bulbs you donate will be free of Jumping Worms to the best of you knowledge. I understand that if jumping worms are found I cannot donate.

Print name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Why do we need this policy?

Commentary by the Jumping Worm Committee

As Master Gardener Volunteers we have a responsibility to our community and partners to be acting in an environmentally responsible manner. In addition we need to maintain our integrity and uphold our reputation. Therefore, we shall be following the industry BMPs for Jumping worms and in the course of our work show that we followed due diligence in not spreading jumping worms. This means we should take care not to introduce them to uninfested areas. We also owe it to our fellow MGVs who also have to work on the projects and risk the chance of taking them back to their own gardens.

This protocol is now a local policy supported by UWEX-Winnebago Co. It is not a recommendation but something you will be expected to follow if you want to donate plants or use donated plants in/on MGV projects. At some point jumping worms will become as common as buckthorn or garlic mustard, and at that time the protocol will be re-evaluated.

We owe it to our fellow MGV, partners, and the community as a whole to be verifying to the best of our ability that the plants being donated do not have jumping worms

Under the reclassification of “Restricted” selling, importing, transporting or introducing this species remains illegal and Best Management Practices offer guidance for complying with that law.

2018 ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET

You and your guest are cordially invited to attend Winnebago County Master Gardeners Association Awards Banquet

Tuesday, December 4, 2018

5:30 pm Social (cash bar)

6:00 pm Dinner

7:00 pm Awards Program

LaSure's Banquet Hall 3125 S Washburn Oshkosh WI 54904

Buffet will be served

Cost per person*: $15-Member _____

New Trainee (No Cost) _____

$15-Guest _____

<u>Please return NO LATER than November 29, 2018</u>

Mail w/payment to: Linda Baeten 1112 Merritt Ave Oshkosh WI 54901

Make check out to: WCMGA

Your Name: (Please print)

_____

Guest Name (Please print) _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

Part of the cost per person is being covered by WCMGA

Math in the Garden

By Lawanda Jungwirth

Do you realize how often math is involved in gardening? Here is the answer to the oft-asked question, "When will I ever need math in real life?"

Say you want to fence your garden. You measure two sides, add those measurements together and multiply by two to find out how much fencing to buy to enclose all four sides. Add a few extra feet to allow for going around corners.

What if you want to spread soil, compost or mulch two inches deep throughout your garden? How many 1 cubic foot bags should you buy? Multiply the length of two adjacent sides, in feet, to get the square footage of the area. Divide that number by 12 because one cubic foot, which is 12"x12"x12", will cover 12 square feet one inch deep. Then multiply by 2 because your plan was to spread the material two inches deep. Note that not all bags contain one cubic foot of material. Read the bag and adjust the math depending on how much it contains. Sometimes bags are labeled with helpful information like "covers 12 square feet, one inch deep."

If the area to be covered is large and you don't want to haul heavy bags of material, but want it delivered in bulk to your driveway, you'll have to calculate how many cubic yards to request. A cubic yard is 36"x36"x36". After dividing the square footage by 12, divide by 27, since there are 27 cubic feet in a cubic yard. Round up and then multiply by 2 as before for 2 inches deep.

Know that topsoil, mulch and compost delivery services don't measure to the exact cubic inch but rather estimate by how full the dump truck looks. Don't worry – you're more likely to receive too much than to be shorted.

Another place math is necessary in the garden is in plant and seed spacing. For example, you have an area 12 feet long and the recommended plant spacing is 8". Twelve feet is 144". Dividing 144" by 8" results in 16 plants needed, or just 15 if you want equal spacing at the ends of the row.

You'll also need to do a little easy math when buying seeds. Some seed packets specify the number of seeds inside while others say something like "enough to plant a 25-foot row." All seed packets tell you how far apart to space the seeds. This can vary widely depending on the final size of the plant – from ½" up to two or more feet. Sometimes seed packets will also specify a distance between rows. This can range from one to several feet, again depending on mature plant size.

You'll need to know how much space you have for planting so you can determine how many seed packets to buy. Or, if you determine that you really want to plant five packets of bean seeds, three packets of peas, one of carrots, five tomato plants, three zucchini and two cucumbers, you might have to calculate how much to enlarge your garden!

Healthy Soils Make for Healthy Plants

By Lawanda Jungwirth

UW-Extension Master Gardeners must acquire ten hours of continuing education each year to retain Master Gardener certification. Most months, an hour of education is offered prior to our monthly business meetings.

In September, our speaker was Patrick Lake from the Oshkosh office of the National Resources Conservation Service. He was an enthusiastic and entertaining speaker. As part of the NRCS, he deals mostly with farmers, but he conveyed a very important message for home gardeners who are concerned about the health of their land and the environment.

Mr. Lake listed five practices that lead to soil health, which lead to plant health, less need for supplemental water and fertilizer, reduced runoff, increased drought tolerance, reduced pest and disease problems, less work!

Here are the NCRS's five tenets for soil health starting with the easiest.

- Minimize disturbance
- Keep the soil covered at all times
- Keep living roots in the soil 24/7/365
- Maximize plant diversity
- Integrate animals and/or animal manures

Don't be intimidated by the list, especially the last item. Each gardener should do as many of the practices as they can and not worry about what they can't do.

Minimizing disturbance is important because when soil is tilled or turned, soil microbes release a short-term flood of nutrients into the soil – something you need neither at the end of the season nor in spring before seeds even break germination. Another way to minimize disturbance is to cut plants off at the soil line at the end of the season rather than pulling them up. The roots will decompose in place and feed the soil.

The benefits of keeping the soil covered with a mulch is something I've covered here many times before. If you'd like a review, please see http://garden.iam4pack.com/no-bare-soil.

Keeping living roots in the soil year-round is another way to keep soil covered and goes hand-in-hand with maximizing plant diversity. Perennial fruits, vegetables, and flowers along with trees and shrubs have living roots, even when they are dormant in winter. A larger variety of plant roots in the soil leads to more diversity of soil microbes, and if those microbes can feed the soil year round, that's all the better.

Organic matter increases in the soil when tilling is eliminated and when plants and plant residues cover the soil. Here are some statistics from the NRCS: Organic matter holds 18-20 times its weight in water and recycles nutrients for plants to use. Just one percent organic matter in the top six inches of soil can hold approximately 27,000 gallons of water per acre! Retaining water in the soil reduces the need for supplemental watering, helps plants tolerate drought, and reduces evaporation and runoff of soil and nutrients.

Animals such as chickens, cows, goats and pigs provide fertilizer in the form of manure, pest control, soil aeration and overall ecological improvement of the landscape. Not everyone has the space or desire to care for animals, but if you can at least access some animal manure you get five stars!

Member Business Meeting Minutes - October 9, 2018

Treasurer's Report: The report was read into the meeting.

Secretary's Report: The minutes will be online.

Project Updates: Leads think about your reports and get them in. They are due between now and December 1st.

Education Committee: Mary Moosemiller and **Melissa Weyland** are the new 4H co-leads.

Workshops: March 9th – Mark Konlock from Green Bay Botanical Horticulture and Max Martin from the Ag station in Surgeon Bay talking on potatoes.

June 8 **Valerie Stabenow** - coordinating a trip to Willow Creek Iris for cement leaf casting class,

A trip is being planned to possibly Philadelphia in the spring. There are also a couple day trips being planned.

Winter Escapes ~ Summer Dreams flyer is coming out, so watch for that. There will be no silent auction only a raffle.

State Representatives report: WIMGA needs people to work on the newsletter. Some of the other Master Gardener groups have had a drop in membership, because of the changes that are happening in the association.

New business: If anyone wanting to order any Master Gardener clothing it needs to be into **Deb Voyles** by November. Paine Art Center has work dates of October 17,18,19 at(8 - 3) for digging up the annuals and planting the tulips; November 1st and 2nd for the formal gardens. Buckthorn removal will be in November on Saturdays. An email will be sent out on this.

November Elections – We will be voting for Secretary, Vice President(s) and (2) 3-year term members at large and (1) 1-year term member at large to fill out a term.

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting by **Mary Shepard**. **Tom Weber** second the motion.

Upcoming Events - See Calendar for October Events

Dec. 4: Awards Banquet, LaSures
Feb. 16: Winter Escape, Summer Dreams

Answer to What am I?

By Jane Kuhn

I am narrowleaf ironweed. Order: Asterales. Family: Asteraceae / Compositae – Aster family. Genus: Vernonia Schreb. – ironweed. Species: Vernonia lettermannii Engelm. ex A. Gray – narrowleaf ironweed. Other name: iron butterfly. Although its parentage is native to southern states, iron butterfly has proven itself winter hardy in Wisconsin. Unlike most other members of the Aster Family, iron butterfly flowers are composed only of disc florets with no rays. This plant is attractive in all seasons, reliably hardy, long-lived and well-behaved.

References: USDA Plants Database and associated links.

Answer to Ask a Plant Health Advisor:

Tianna Jordan, UW-Madison Plant Pathology, Item number: XHT1221

What is common corn smut? Common corn smut is a fungal disease that affects field, pop, and sweet corn, as well as the corn relative teosinte (Zea mexicana). Common corn smut is generally not economically significant except in sweet corn where relatively low levels of disease make the crop aesthetically unappealing for fresh market sale and difficult to process for freezing or canning. Interestingly, the early stages of common corn smut are eaten as a delicacy in Mexico where the disease is referred to as huitlacoche (see University of Wisconsin Garden Facts XHT1230, "Huitlacoche")

What does common corn smut look like? Common corn smut leads to tumor-like swellings (i.e., galls) on corn ears, kernels, tassels, husks, leaves, stalks, buds, and less frequently on aerial roots. Some galls (particularly those on leaves) are small and hard. More typically, however, galls are fleshy and smooth, silvery-white to green, and can be four to five inches in diameter. As fleshy galls mature, their outer surfaces become papery and brittle, and their inner tissues become powdery and black. Galls eventually rupture, releasing the powder (i.e., the spores of the causal fungus).

Where does common corn smut come from? Common corn smut is caused by the fungus Ustilago maydis, which can survive for several years as spores in soil and corn residue. Spores are spread by wind or through water splashing up onto young plants. Spores can also be spread through the manure of animals that have eaten infected corn. U. maydis most typically infects corn ears via the silks. The fungus can also enter plants through wounds caused by insect feeding, hail, or injuries from machinery. Infection is favored by warm weather (79-93°F) and moderate rainfall. Corn grown in low fertility soils or soils with excessive nitrogen also have a greater likelihood of infection.

How do I save plants with common corn smut? Once galls have formed, treatment is not available. Remove and burn (where allowed by local ordinance) or bury smut galls before they burst to prevent spores from spreading and overwintering. In order for eradication to be effective, however, you will need to coordinate efforts with your neighbors. Fungicides are currently not an effective control against common smut.

How do I avoid problems with common corn smut in the future? Plant resistant corn varieties whenever possible. Check with your favorite sweet corn seed supplier for available varieties. Also, avoid injuring plants (e.g., when weeding) to reduce possible entry points for the common corn smut fungus. Maintain well-balanced soil fertility (specifically nitrogen) based on a soil nutrient test. Use crop rotation (see University of Wisconsin Garden Facts XHT1210 "Using Crop Rotation in the Home Vegetable Garden" for details) to allow time for corn smut spores to naturally die off in the soil.

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	Sally Lindo - **looking for new lead**
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	Julie Gutsmiedl - **looking for new lead**
Sullivan's Woods	Linda Loker

Project Leads: If you'd like your meetings listed on the calendar, please email information to Anne Murphy.

November 2018

Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6 Board Mtg. 6PM 	7	8	9	10
11	12 Flower Arranging Park View 1:30PM	13 Business Mtg. 6PM	14	15	16	17
18	19	20 Education Committee Benvenuto's 5:30PM	21	22 	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

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