



# Winnebago County Master Gardeners

## Newsletter

November 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.

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*“Love the trees until their leaves fall off, then encourage them to try again next year.”*

*Get your Awards  
Banquet  
reservation in  
today! See invite  
later in  
newsletter!*

## What am I?

By Jane Kuhn

I am an herbaceous perennial which is native to woodlands and rocky pastures in the Eastern and Midwest areas of the United States. Growing to a height of 18-24 inches and width of 12-18 inches, I prefer moist, well-drained soil in full sun and am hardy in zones 3-8. I bloom from mid-August through fall with dense, plume-like terminal clusters of tiny yellow flowers which turn into billows of cream colored fluffy seeds. I have semi-evergreen heart-shaped leaves and rigid stems.

Propagation is by division every 3-4 years or by seed. Spent flowers should be removed if self-seeding is not wanted. Flowers should be cut back to encourage re-bloom. I can be used in butterfly and wild gardens or as a groundcover or border perennial. Butterflies attracted to me are sulphurs, hairstreaks and skippers. Monarchs visit during their autumn migration.

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



**Monkshood in Cindy Meszaros' fall garden.**

*Picture submitted by Cindy Meszaros.*



**Hostas blanketing Cindy Meszaros' fall garden.**  
*Picture submitted by Cindy Meszaros.*

## Letter from your Presidents: Linda Loker & Kathy Schultz



It's November! It's Election time!

Have we had enough moisture yet?! Our garden friends that profess to the "no till" gardening method are probably very happy this clean up season!

The first order of business for our November member meeting will be our education hour with Mandy Dornfeld from the Extension office. She will give us information on generational differences. Mandy has been our speaker in the past ... be prepared for an enjoyable and informative presentation!

Next up will be the election process, and as mentioned at the October business meeting, we have candidates in all categories. A very big thank you to all who have stepped forward - we cannot say enough about the advantages of the "changing of the guard" in any organization. New life brings about stronger growth. We look forward to this exciting time.

Projects should be winding down now, and completing project summary reports for the year. We hope that all projects were able to achieve their goals for the year. We are so proud that our organization continues to excel with volunteer hours in Winnebago Co. Kudos to all of you! If you would like to co-lead on a project, please let our Vice President, **Britton Dake**, know. We have a few areas that you might be interested in.

There are a few projects that become active at this time of year - we hope that you are able to help out the Paine with digging and planting of the bulbs; and oh the buckthorn...need to do what Aaron Rogers always says, "Let's get after it"! Sullivan's Woods was active with students again this fall after the school district's re-organizing of the science program.

**Linda Baeten** has been our membership committee person and she has done a great job, but would like to now offer this opportunity to a member that may be interested in this committee. We will talk about it at the business meeting, so take some time to consider. This is a one- person committee, and it entails keeping a list of all members - active, inactive, and Emeritus members; and in the fall of the year, this person collects the membership dues, and has been assisting the current Presidents with the Awards Banquet invitations.

Our Education Committee is ready for Winter Escape~Summer Dreams seminar on Saturday, February 15. This is a great educational day - up to 4.5 hours - and fun! Tell your friends, and join your fellow members for a very nice day! Save The Date! Tuesday, December 3 is our Awards Banquet. We had invites at the October meeting, and it is also available on the website and in this newsletter. Please consider joining your fellow members for an evening of fun...it is always a nice get-together with great prizes...and you never know what surprises are in store!

We are repeating our closing sentiments from last year, as they hold dear to our hearts -

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*

## It's Time to Harvest Pumpkins

By Lawanda Jungwirth

A bright orange pumpkin is not necessarily ready for harvest. Full-sized pumpkins take 90-105 days from planting until they are ready to harvest while miniatures are ready in 70-90 days. If you bought and planted seedlings, subtract seven days.

If you have no idea when you planted your pumpkins, there are other ways to determine whether they are ready for harvest. If the vines have dried up and the stems have hardened, they are ready to pick. Another way is to press your fingernail into the pumpkin rind. If it resists piercing, it is ready. Finally, a pumpkin that is ready to harvest sounds hollow when given a thump.

If you can't get to harvesting immediately after you determine the pumpkins are ready, they can stay in the garden a few more weeks unless a hard frost (less than 27° F) threatens.

Choose a dry, sunny day for harvesting. Cut the stem from the main vine with a shears or lopper. Do not carry pumpkins by their stems and be careful not to damage or remove the stem from the pumpkin. Try to leave at least four inches of stem on the pumpkin. This long stem serves as a natural seal to protect the pumpkin from frost damage and rotting.

After harvest, wipe soil and insects off the pumpkin. Use a dry rag if there isn't much soil, or a wet rag in soapy water with one part bleach to 10 parts water. The bleach will evaporate quickly and will not affect edibility. Make sure pumpkins are completely dry before storing or piling.

Once pumpkins are harvested, they should be cured so that they last longer, possibly for several months. Curing hardens their skin and protects the inside from decay. While not practical for most gardeners, the ideal way to cure pumpkins is to place them in a spot with 80-85° F and 80-85% relative humidity for a week to 10 days. Barring those conditions, place them in a dry, sunny spot for two weeks.

Next, for long term storage, the ideal is a temperature of 50-55° with a relative humidity of 50-70%. Unless you are a market gardener and are set up to provide those perfect conditions, just move the pumpkins to the coolest, shadiest spot you can find until you are ready to either display or use them for cooking and baking. If possible, don't place them on a concrete floor and keep them from touching each other so that air can circulate around them.

Check stored pumpkins regularly and remove any that show signs of disease or rot so that it doesn't spread to the others.

As soon as all your pumpkins are harvested, pull up the vines. You'll want to avoid carrying any disease or insect problems over to next year, so if they haven't been perfectly healthy up until harvest, bag and place the vines in the trash or burn them.

## Perpetual Spinach

By Lawanda Jungwirth

Spinach is easy to grow but even varieties touted as slow to bolt succumb to hot weather way too soon each summer. There is an alternative in a plant from the beet family that is actually a chard, called [perpetual spinach](#). It tastes like neither beets nor chard, but like spinach. In mid-October, my perpetual spinach is still growing, as fresh and green as it was in June.

Perpetual spinach seeds can be planted directly into the soil outdoors, ½ inch deep and 6 inches apart, or started indoors and transplanted out later. It would work well in a small-space garden or container as well.

Perpetual spinach does best in full sun, but afternoon shade won't hurt production. It prefers soil rich in organic matter and responds well to compost and fertilizer. It is a forgiving plant though, and will do fine in poorer soil. Make sure it gets plenty of water midsummer so the leaves do not turn bitter.

Perpetual spinach grows in the manner of chard. Leaves develop in a circular manner around the crown. Keep outside leaves cut to promote fresh new growth from the inside of the plant. Just the two plants I grew produced more than enough greens for the entire season. In fact, they produced so abundantly that I sometimes cut the outside leaves and composted them just to keep the plant producing.

Harvest can begin when leaves are three inches tall. Harvest continuously – if leaves get to be 10 inches tall, they develop an earthy taste. If you require a large amount of greens at one time, you can cut the entire plant down to three inches and let it regrow.

Greens should be stored in a plastic bag, unwashed, in the refrigerator. They can be used in any way that spinach is used – fresh in salads, steamed, sautéed, or braised, and in soups, stews and casseroles. Stems are larger and sturdier than spinach stems, but can also be eaten.

Perpetual spinach is rarely bothered by insect pests. However, you may see slug damage or find leaves with aphids or flea beetles. Just remove the affected leaves and let the plant continue to grow.

Like Swiss chard, perpetual spinach tolerates cool temperatures down to the upper 20s. Most people agree that the leaves taste even better after a light frost. It's possible that a plant could even tolerate a hard frost because the outside leaves may protect the inside ones. Just remove the frost-killed leaves and see if the plant continues growing.

The name "perpetual" is slightly misleading. "Perpetual" does not mean "perennial." Perpetual spinach is a biennial plant – in its second year it will set seed and then die.

Even if you don't like spinach, this plant can find a place in your landscape. Its leaves are a pretty, bright green, about a foot tall, and would make a nice vertical accent to a sunny flower bed or border.

# Fall's burning question: Should I bag my leaves? Or mulch them?

Author: Jon Trappe, post-doctoral associate, CFANS horticultural science



**It will be difficult to fully mulch this many leaves and not cause problems to the turf before going into winter. Collect them and compost off-site.**

*Photo: Jon Trappe, UMN Extension*

The leaves are finally turning in the southern half of Minnesota...and that means it's time to rake, or does it? Take a look at this popular article written by UMN Extension's Turf Specialist Jon Trappe in 2018:

Many homeowners wonder if they should be collecting and removing tree leaves from their lawns prior to mowing, or if the tree leaves can be mulched (mown) into the lawn. Like many recommendations for lawn management decisions, this one can also be answered with the phrase, "it depends."

## How to decide

A number of factors will determine whether you should be mulching your tree leaves or collecting them, including:

- What amount of leaves are present before and after mowing?
- How long after being mulched will the leaves be on the grass?
- What are the air and soil temperatures in the next few weeks?

## When it makes sense? It's free fertilizer!

In general, the preferred choice would be to mulch the tree leaves when you mow the grass.

Most deciduous tree leaves are around 2 percent nitrogen, which is the most important nutrient for plants. So, by mulching your tree leaves into your lawn, you are essentially getting a free fertilizer application of nitrogen.



There is even one report of maple leaves reducing dandelion numbers in lawns the following spring after leaf mulching. Truly, some leaf litter can be good for a lawn.

Successfully mulching leaves into a lawn canopy requires more frequent mowing in the fall and possibly several passes with the mower to mulch the leaves sufficiently. Specialized mulching mowers are available, and these mower types will also be beneficial year-round to mulch grass leaves into the canopy.

Chopping leaves into small pieces is important.

### **When lots of leaves on the grass are NOT a good idea...**

Don't leave excessive leaf litter left on a lawn when and if:

- It shades out the turf at one of the most critical times of the year that the grass plants are storing carbohydrates before the winter.
- It increases the incidence of snow mold diseases, resulting in dead patches of turf or a thinned canopy during spring green-up.
- It slows the spring green-up by reducing soil temperatures in the spring, by acting as a mulch layer on the soil surface.
- It provides a more suitable environment for burrowing pests like voles.

### **So how do you know if you have excessive tree leaves?**

The best way is to try mowing a pass or two and mulching the leaves. Make sure that no more than 20 percent of the turf is covered by tree leaves after being mulched.

### **What leaves make the best mulch?**

Some tree leaf species are more easily mulched than others. Ash and maple tend to be more difficult to mulch than oak leaves, for example.

Also, wet leaves will be more difficult to mulch than leaves that are dry, so if possible, avoid mulching leaves until they have dried.

Generally speaking, the finer the leaves are chopped up the better, as they will be broken down more quickly by weather and soil microbes. Depending on the amount of trees in your area, you may need to mow more frequently than what the turf needs if your objective is to mulch the leaves.

## Answer to What am I?

By Jane Kuhn

I am autumn goldenrod or Golden Fleece. Order: Asterales. Family: Asteraceae / Compositae – Aster family. Genus: Solidago L – goldenrod. Species: Solidago sphacelata Raf. – autumn goldenrod. Other name: Golden Fleece. Goldenrod is widely known as a medicinal plant to treat ailments including inflammation, kidney stones, pain and speed in healing wounds. The herbal medicine community has used goldenrod for hundreds of years, learning of its value from Native Americans. It was used in an herbal mix of US native plants as a local tea substitute after the Boston Tea Party. Dyers also use the yellow pigment from the flowers for wool and silk textiles.

This plant can be seen in the rain garden located at the entrance to the Coughlin Center.



References: USDA Plants Database and associated links.

### Opportunity for Fall Project - Buckthorn Removal

**Dates** : Saturdays Nov 2, 9, 16

**Time** : 10 AM - 1 PM

**What to wear** : Long sleeves (layering is good), jeans and gloves

**Bring** : Loppers, pruner, hand saw, sawzall (no chain saws), whatever you have and a love for working outside !

## Apple Scab Prevention for 2020

By Travis Cleveland, University of Illinois Extension

Has apple scab been a problem on your crabapples this year? At this point in the season, many apples and crabapples have lost most of their leaves and appear quite bare as a result of this disease. Apple Scab is an extremely common fungal disease of apple and crabapple caused by the pathogen *Venturia inaequalis*. Symptoms first appear as olive-green spots on the foliage. The spots often form along or near the leaf veins, eventually developing a dark, velvety appearance. Infected leaves also may appear curled or puckered. By mid-summer, infected leaves turn yellow, and prematurely drop from the tree. Apple scab will not kill a tree, but it has the ability to make a tree appear rather unsightly. Additionally, repeated defoliation may weaken a tree resulting in reducing growth, flowering, and increased susceptibility to other stresses.

Fortunately, you have a variety of options to help reduce damage from apple scab for the 2020 growing season.



*Crabapples almost entirely defoliated by apple scab (October 2019)*

Start by removing leaf litter around your diseased trees. Fallen diseased leaves harbor the overwintering scab fungus that will infect next year's leaves. Dispose of leaves by raking and burning. In areas where raking is not practical, use a mulching mower to help speed decomposition of fallen leaves. Fall turf fertilization practices will further help with the decomposition process.

Prune your trees to promote good air movement through the canopy. Ideally, the foliage on a properly pruned tree dry quickly, reducing the likelihood of infection. Proper pruning will also make it easier to obtain good coverage of canopy when applying fungicides.

Fungicide sprays effectively protect developing leaves on susceptible cultivars. Be ready to apply the first application early in the spring, when leaves just begin to emerge from buds (about 1/4 inch green). Repeat application will be necessary to maintain protection. Re-apply according to label intervals until 2 weeks after petal fall. If the tree is free of leaf spots at that point, further treatments are unnecessary.

Intervals between sprays depend on several factors. The product's label provides a range of days between sprays. Follow the shortest labeled spray interval during periods of frequent wet

weather and in plantings that had severe scab infections the previous growing season. A longer interval is acceptable during dry weather and in plantings where scab has been less of a problem.



*Early symptoms of crabapple scab on Prairifire Crabapple.*



*Scab infected crabapple leaves changing to a yellow-orange color before falling from the tree.*

## Member Business Meeting Minutes - Oct. 8, 2019

1. Lisa Mick, UW – Oshkosh Grounds and Automotive Supervisor presented an overview of the changes to a pollinator friendly campus, as well as the various vegetable plots found around the campus.
2. **Sue Egner** sent a sign-up sheet for buckthorn work this fall. Please contact Sue to sign up for this fall project.
3. **Joni Pagel** presented the treasurer's report.
4. Secretary report – board minutes are found on our website, and business meeting minutes are published in the newsletter.
5. Project update –
  - a. Britton's new address is 812 Oak St. Oshkosh, WI 54901
  - b. Thank you to all who have expressed interest in either leading or co-leading a project for 2020.
  - c. Neenah Library and Omro Library have folks interested in co-leading, so if anyone else is thinking of volunteering, please contact **Britton** or **Kimberly**.
  - d. Morgan house, Rain Garden and Farmer's market are looking for co-leads.
  - e. If anyone else is interested, please contact **Britton** or **Kimberly** for more information on the responsibilities of a lead/co-lead, or to volunteer. Some have said that they would be happy to co-lead with a friend, so please consider the buddy system.
  - f. We will be announcing a few of the Projects new leads or co-leads by the November 12<sup>th</sup> business meeting.
6. Education Committee update. **Linda Werner** gave an update on the activities of the Education committee.
  - a. **Linda Werner** reported there are plans for a Saturday morning workshop in March 2020 with Justin Kroening, from Stone Silo plants, talking about pollinators. A speaker from Wild Ones will talk about natives in the landscape.
  - b. In April, there are plans to screen Piet Oudolf's "5 Seasons". Need a venue large enough to hold 150 people.
  - c. The WCMGA Book Club plans to spin off into a private book club. There will still be book reviews at the membership meetings.

- d. **Mary Moosemiller** continues to work with 4-H members. Currently, there is a student poster contest “Where would we be without pollinators.”
- e. Ascend is cleaning up gardens done for the year. Planning continues for 2020 WE/SD.
- f. [Doug Tallamy](#) will speak at the Wild Ones “Harmony in nature” conference 2021.
7. State Representative report – **Deby Voyles** relayed the following: the next state meeting is on Sat., Oct. 26 from 10am to 3pm at the Dreyfuss Center on UW-Stevens Point campus 1015 Reserve St. Stevens Point, WI. Bernie Williams from DNR will talk about jumping worms, the latest! And Dr. Paul Whitaker, Prof of Biology at Marathon will talk about Climate change and its effect on gardening. Please RSVP by October 18<sup>th</sup>.
8. Reserve Money Decisions – **Kathy Schultz** reported the decisions of the October board meeting on goals and reserve money. Background information – members of the board and **Kimberly** met with Bonnie Graf, CPA with nonprofit organizations to gain understanding and information on how to proceed with developing a policy and process for handling the “extra” money in our account. The board members also used on line resources such as Propel and Board Source for information on reserve funds. The questions the board answered is how much money we feel is necessary to be able to operate this association and for how long, if no income was coming in. Our average expenses each year to operate is approximately \$11,000. This is different than our budget which reflects things like trips taken, or other expenses and fundraisers that may occur.
- The board decided to keep two years secure and to allow for spending of a percentage of the extra money, up to 30% of that balance. This will allow for a range of monies that could be available for an effort or achievement of a goal of the association.
- The board will set up a committee that will consist of two board members, one education committee member and 2 to 4 association members at large. This committee will meet two to three times this fall to bring back what our goals will be, and a policy/process for determining how much money would be spent (if any) for the association goal(s). Anyone wishing to volunteer for this committee should contact **Kathy Schultz, Linda Loker** or **Kimberly Miller**.
9. The award dinner will be December 3<sup>rd</sup> (no snow that night), and sign-up sheets are available on line.
10. We have candidates for the positions open for the November election, but are still open to anyone who wishes to run for any of the offices.
11. **Barb Harrison** presented more tidbits from the Doug Tallamy book.
12. **Ginny Slattery** announced work dates of October 21 for pulling plant material, and October 22, 23 for planting 10,000 tulip bulbs at the Paine. Please come to help, as it is greatly needed. Booties for jumping worm protection will be provided.

13. Door prizes were given out to lucky winners, and meeting was adjourned at 7:35 PM by a motion by **Mary Shepard**.

## Upcoming Events - See Calendar for October Events

Dec. 3: Awards Banquet

Jan. 21: Education Committee, Benvenuto's, 5:30 PM

Feb. 15: Winter Escape~Summer Dreams

Feb. 18: Education Committee, Benvenuto's, 5:30 PM

Mar. 17: Education Committee, Benvenuto's, 5:30 PM

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

May 19: Education Committee, Benvenuto's, 5:30 PM



### Gardening Tip

Punch a hole in plant ID tags and loop them through a key ring. Hang nearby when you need to remember the care instructions for what you planted.



## 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	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 lott
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.



## 2019 ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET

YOU AND YOUR GUEST ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND WINNEBAGO COUNTY  
MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION AWARDS BANQUET

Tuesday, December 3, 2019

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 \_\_\_\_\_

\$15-Guest \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE RETURN NO LATER THAN NOVEMBER 29, 2019

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

## November 2019

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

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