

# Winnebago County Master Gardeners Newsletter

October 2021

## 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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*“**OCTOBER** is about trees revealing colors they’ve hidden all year. People have an **OCTOBER** as well.”*  
-Jim Storm



Monarch on asters in the Butterfly Garden at Miravida Living. It's important to have nectar plants for pollinators late in the season.

*Submitted by Jane Kuhn.*

## What am I?

By Jane Kuhn

I am a hardy perennial which blooms in fall, providing late-season color and source of pollen for bees and other pollinators. I grow from 2 ½ to 6 feet tall with hairy stems and leaves. My alternate leaves are up to 4 inches long and 1 inch wide, with broad, clasping bases and pointed tips. My individually stalked flower heads are in an open, rounded cluster at the tops of the main stem branches. Flower stalks and bracts at the base of each flower head are covered with gland-tipped hairs. Each head is about 1 ½ inches wide with 40 or more bright purple (sometimes pinkish purple or pale lavender), petal-like ray flowers surrounding a central disk.

I grow well in average soil but will benefit from plenty of compost and need full sun. I do best if divided every two or three years, removing half to two thirds of my plants (which can be planted in another location or shared) and leaving the remainder in place. I can also be directly seeded into the garden or seeded indoors for transplanting later. Since my plants may be aggressive, a yearly edging with a shovel is suggested. Powdery mildew may afflict my leaves during the cool, moist weather of fall. Although there are many species and cultivars, it is easy to distinguish my plant because the compound flowers are larger in size and have more numerous ray florets

## WCMGA Contacts

*Check your membership guide for contact information.*

### **Co-Presidents (Nominations Accepted)**

Ed Dombrowski & Bob Kneepkens (12.31.21)

### **Vice President**

Kathy Procknow & Debra Butch (12.31.22)

### **Secretary**

Anne Murphy (12.31.22)

### **Treasurer (Nominations Accepted)**

Deby Voyles (12.31.21)

### **Board Representatives (3 positions Nominations Accepted)**

Ruth Retzlaff (12.31.22)

Grace Oliver (12.31.22)

Virginia Slattery (12.31.21)

Sandra Gollither (12.31.21)

### **Advisor**

Open

### **Newsletter Compilation**

Anne Murphy



We would love your help! If you are interested in contributing to a future newsletter by writing an article, submitting a photo, or sharing a story, please let me know by the 15th of each month by emailing [pakster0605@yahoo.com](mailto:pakster0605@yahoo.com). Each article submitted will count toward your volunteer hours. Thank you!

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



We would like to thank everyone who attended or tried to attend the September Business meeting. It was our first venture into the cyberworld as hosts of Zoom. Your patience is/was appreciated. If you were unable to access the meeting, check for minutes in this newsletter. We will continue to hone our skills with Zoom and hope things get better with each meeting.

The election of WCMGA officers and board positions takes place in the fall of each year. In September, nominations for election of officers & board positions begins and ends in October. This fall the open positions include President, Treasurer and Board Members. We hope members are interested in one of these positions.



Co-Presidents are an option for two members to share the position, which may increase an interest in running for this position. In November, election of officers/board members takes place. Votes will be tabulated and the names of members filling the vacant positions will be announced.

There is a goal to resume continuing education events before each Business meeting, as occurred in the past. For the safety of our members, the educational presentation, prior to the Business meetings, will be made via Zoom for the rest of the year. As of the writing of this President's Message, Dr. Brian Hudelson, "doctor death" will present prior to the October Business meeting and PJ Liesch, "the bug guy", has agreed to present before the November business meeting.

Happy Harvesting and Gardening to All,

Bob and Ed

## Quaking Aspen Cools a Warm Summer Day

By Lawanda Jungwirth



On the hottest summer day when the air is still and so humid you can barely breathe, the slightest movement of air can stir the leaves of the quaking aspen. The whispering of the leaves provides a small measure of relief from the heat, even if it's only psychological.

The Latin name for quaking aspen is *Populus tremuloides* and the reason that the leaves tremble as they do is structural. The petioles, the little stalks that connect the leaves to the stems, are flat and flexible so the leaves act like little fans trembling at the end of the petiole. The

leaves are almost heart-shaped, but the top of the heart doesn't quite dip downward. Leaf edges are very finely toothed.

In summer, the leaves are shiny green above and a dull green, almost silver, below. They turn a beautiful bright gold in fall, and the bark is whitish in color, making quaking aspens probably the most photographed trees in North America. They are especially popular as September calendar photos.

Quaking aspen has a larger native range than any other tree in North America, crossing east-west over nine time zones and ranging north-south from Canada to Mexico. They are also the largest tree in North America. You might wonder how this can be when surely some of the stately oaks are bigger. Well, quaking aspens grow in colonies with a common root system. The largest single colony in the U.S. is in Utah's Fishlake National Forest. It has over 47,000 stems, is estimated to weigh 13 million pounds, and covers 108 acres. That is one big tree!

Quaking aspens provide food and shelter for many animals, birds and butterflies. Deer, rabbits, porcupines and beavers eat the leaves and young stems. The flowers of quaking aspen appear in spring before the leaves emerge and are called catkins. These catkins provide food for an array of birds and insects. Beavers use the trunks and branches for dams and lodges. At the end of their lives, dead and rotting aspens provide shelter and food for wildlife and soil microorganisms.

A related tree, big-tooth aspen, is quite similar but has larger leaves edged with rounded teeth. Spring foliage of big-tooth aspen is almost white while the quaking aspens is a misty green.

Quaking aspen grows quickly, sometimes 30' in its first ten years, and ultimately reaches up to 65' tall. It thrives in both wet or dry soils. Because it grows so fast, its wood is not the strongest and because it tends to colonize it can become weedy, so it is best grown in naturalistic areas rather than as a landscape specimen. Quaking aspen is relatively short-lived as trees go, and 50 years is about all you can expect before they begin to decline. If you have the spot for quaking aspen in your landscape though, the fluttering of its leaves and its beauty will bring you much joy.

## ***Attention all Master Gardener Volunteers***

*Co-Leads needed to head up the Oshkosh Farmers Market project.*

- *This is an important project, fitting with our MGV community education priority.*
- *The Oshkosh Farmers Market wants us back! "The information and activities the Master Gardeners have presented in previous markets have been enjoyed by both young and old." - Michelle Schmid-Schultz, Market Manager*
- *Can participate as much or as little as you would like. Plan dates according to your schedule and interest; such as one Saturday morning a month, 2 or 3 times a season, every other week, or whatever works for you.*
- *Materials all ready to go; tables, reference books, hand outs, posters, etc. Or, do something different; create &/or purchase new materials. Be as creative as you want!*
- *A large source of volunteers (our membership) willing to help out. Also, former leads are available to provide advice and guidance.*
- *A fun and enjoyable morning; visiting with others, people watching, and shopping at the Market!*

*If interested in being a Lead or Co-lead for this project, please contact Kathy Procknow or Deb Butch. Thank you.*



## **WE NEED YOU!**

**Positions up for nominations:**

**President  
Treasurer  
Board Members**

**PLEASE** think about what you could gain by becoming a board member! It's a great way to learn more about your organization and the camaraderie is amazing! Bring your ideas to light and become an active member. Contact Anne Murphy at [pakster0605@yahoo.com](mailto:pakster0605@yahoo.com) to nominate someone or yourself by October 15.

# *Gardening with Native Plants:*

## *Rain Gardens in Drought*



*Rain garden in the Native Plant Garden*

In September, the garden usually experiences cooler high and low daily temperatures and decreasing rainfall compared to the summer months. Plant growth slows and some species enter dormancy. Fall-blooming species are in flower and summer seeds mature and disperse. Insect and bird migrations are underway. Garden tasks include trimming, edging, weeding, seed harvesting, and dead-heading plants that produce many seeds and spread aggressively in all areas.

As I write, Madison has received about 10 inches less than the normal precipitation for this time of year, following a pattern of increasing drought since the “[water year](#)” began in October 2020. If this pattern continues, the water year will end September 30 as moderate drought continues.

Despite drought conditions, our native plant gardens do not need supplementary watering. One exception is our new prairie garden, which was planted this summer and is establishing in full sun during a hot and dry period. We have watered the area occasionally and used light mulch on some areas as the plants produce new growth and even flower during their

first season. In the already established gardens, early season warmth and occasional rains have provided conditions for vigorous growth and flowering for most species.

Rain gardens generally do not require copious amounts of rain, although obviously they handle those conditions well. Despite the drought this season our rain gardens have thrived, but there are some notable differences from previous years. In the lowest part of our large rain garden basin (30 meters in diameter, containing over 100 species), annual or short-lived native perennial species have grown well even under drier-than-usual conditions. These species do well in disturbed sites, growing from the soil seed bank when conditions permit germination. Examples include Pennsylvania smartweed (*Persicaria pensylvanica*) with clustered pink flowers, and dotted smartweed (*Persicaria punctata*) – both members of the buckwheat family. Other “weedy” annual native plants that also germinated this year and have grown to 4–5 feet tall include: lamb’s quarters (*Chenopodium album*), giant ragweed (*Ambrosia trifida*), and pigweed (*Amaranthus retroflexus*). A few individuals of non-native summer annual velvetleaf (*Abutilon theophrasti*) were present before weeding. Under normal and wetter conditions, this basin is filled with lake sedge (*Carex lacustris*), tussock sedge (*Carex stricta*) and blue-joint grass (*Calamagrostis canadensis*). I will be interested to see how the garden responds when it receives more rain in future years.



Panorama of the rain garden in the Native Plant Garden

To respond to questions about managing rain gardens, I visited several rain gardens in the community – five small (approximately 5 to 8 meters in diameter) planted in full sun, one larger (10 by 25 meters) planted years ago in shade, and one larger one planted in full sun in recent years. The smaller gardens contained 5 to 16 native forb, grass, and sedge species. Animal-dispersed native woody plants like mulberry (*Morus alba*) and black walnut (*Juglans nigra*) and non-natives like buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) are growing in most of the established gardens. Four of the small gardens had a few non-native weeds like burdock (*Arctium minus*), Queen Anne’s lace (*Daucus carota*), or curly dock (*Rumex crispus*). Hostas were planted in several of the gardens. Each small garden was unique. For example, one had a ring of northern dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*) with fringed loosestrife

(*Lysimachia ciliata*) in the basin, while another had brown-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia triloba*) in the basin. Unlike the others, one of the small rain gardens is clearly being mowed; it was primarily turfgrass with clumps of sedges and two hostas left unmowed. These gardens would benefit from light weeding, which would not take too much time due to the small garden size and limited number of weeds present.

The shade rain garden included spring-blooming woodland plants like bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadense*) and wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*) as well as summer-blooming savanna species and native grasses and sedges. However, it had woody non-natives and a few scattered non-native weeds. This garden would benefit from light weeding and removing the woody plants before they cast more shade in an already shaded area.

In the youngest garden, native plants are still filling in and there are no large weeds, perhaps because it is being cared for by an active and attentive neighborhood group. Caring for a rain garden is not difficult with some simple observations, and the rewards are many – in wet or dry years.

—*Susan Carpenter, native plant gardener*

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## Tip: Take care of your compost

Spend some time over the next couple of weeks emptying your compost bin. Spread finished compost on your gardens, and turn it into your vegetable beds. Take the opportunity to do any repairs or relocation of your bins if needed. Any unfinished compost can go back in the bin for next year.



## Answer to What am I?

By Jane Kuhn



I am a New England aster. Family: Asteraceae (aster family). Genus: Symphyotrichum Nees (aster). Species: Symphyotrichum novae-angliae (L.) G.L. Nesom. Common name: New England aster. Did you know that the center of the aster is actually composed of many tiny flowerets? Herbalists have used New England Aster tea as a general cold/fever/flu remedy. I can be found in the Park View Cutting Gardens and the Miravida Living Butterfly Garden.

References: USDA Plants Database and associated links.

## COVID-Approved Projects Open for Volunteers

The following is a list of projects that are COVID-approved and open to Master Gardener Volunteers:

- Butterfly Garden at Miravida Living
- Park View Cutting Gardens
- Park View Vegetable Garden
- Park View Prairie Garden
- Oshkosh Area Humane Society Memorial Garden
- Rain Garden at Coughlin Building
- Morgan House
- Paine Art Center and Arboretum
- Octagon House
- Pollinator Garden at Neenah Public Library
- Carter Memorial Library, Omro
- Sullivan's Woods-invasive removal only
- Plant Health Advising-virtual

Please see the **2021 Winnebago County Master Gardener Guide** and contact the **Project Lead** for more information.

## Minutes - Business Meeting, Sept. 14, 2021

Start Time: 6:00 PM – Zoom

**Treasurer's Report:** Deby V. Deferred to next meeting

**Secretary's Report:** Ed reported on the Boards meeting.

**Extension Update:** Search for vacant position deferred to January. The position has decreased to .6 FTE from the County. Should know more about this beginning of the year.

**Education Committee Update:** The education committee will not be holding the Winter Escape / Summer Dreams conference in 2022. This is due to the uncertainty of future meetings. Committee is On HOLD while we find leads. Linda is still posting education ops on Facebook and website.

**State Representatives Report:** None

### NEW BUSINESS

**Project Updates:** Debra B/Kathy P

**Farmer's Market:** Looking for leads. Lots of materials available. Flexible scheduling. Always has volunteers sign up to help.

Projects leads are looking for volunteers to help with Fall clean-up.

Recognition from the partners will be forwarded to membership via emails and newsletter.

Emeritus status is changing to Honors Status. All emeritus members will need to apply for the new Honors Status. Application is easy to fill out and Valerie can help with questions.

The emeritus term is used by the University for retired faculty.

**Recording Education Hours:** Valerie S.

Half our membership has less than 10 hours of the required 10 hours continued education hours needed. Onboarding Lite counts for 10 hours when completed. If you need help, contact Valerie S. Hours need to be posted by Dec. 31.

Tree ID and History <https://mastergardener.extension.wisc.edu/articles/tree-id-and-history> can be used for continuation hours. Several continuing education events are listed on website and Facebook.

### Other:

**Future meetings:** Will be in Zoom.

Mary Shepard thanked Ed and Bob for their leadership.

Jerry asked about dues: \$20/member due by Dec. 31

Valerie asked about a membership form for members to fill out. We can email one to members for mailing in with dues.

Kathy P. asked about voting for WIMGA status: Oct. business meeting. A pre-ballot will be sent out to membership.

Valerie asked for a list of WIMGA pros and cons because only 37 members were at the meeting and the rest should have access to this information. Ed will get that together for members.

Adjourn: 6:50 PM

Volunteer Time: 1 hour

## **Winnebago County Master Gardener Association**

### **2021 Evaluation of Membership in Wisconsin Master Gardener Association**

The Board of the Winnebago County Master Gardeners Association (WCMGA) has been evaluating whether to continue Association membership in the Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association (WIMGA). Below you will find an Overview of WIMGA and the pros and cons of remaining with WIMGA. The Board intends to bring this for a vote by the membership at the Business meeting on October 12, 2021. Please take time to review this information and bring questions to the meeting or contact a member of the Board prior to the meeting.

#### **Overview of the Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association (WIMGA)**

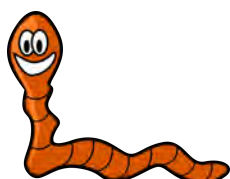
**WIMGA** is an independent, statewide volunteer organization providing support and leadership to individual University of Wisconsin Extension (UWEX) Master Gardener Volunteers (MGVs) and affiliated local MGVs Associations. WIMGA is the collective voice of over 2,000 UWEX MGVs and 53 local Associations, a strong partner with UWEX in advancing the MGV program, and the conduit for statewide networking among MGVs.

**WIMGA Mission**-The mission of WIMGA supports and connects both individual members and affiliated local organizations that assist Division of Extension in community horticultural education and environmental stewardship programs.

**WIMGA Vision** - The Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association will be the collective voice for the local Master Gardener Associations and individual members in active support for their horticultural projects and services; build networks to enhance outreach, share ideas and promote projects; and help extend University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension's educational role to the public.

**Membership**-\$5 dues/person is paid by the Winnebago County Master Gardeners Association (WCMGA) to WIMGA from the \$20 each person pays in annual membership dues to WCMGA. As an Association member of WIMGA, WCMGA must have a representative who is responsible to relay information, attend face-to-face meetings of WIMGA, and participate/lead WIMGA-sponsored activities. Individuals may be a member of WIMGA if their local association is not a member of WIMGA.

(Pro) Reasons to Remain with WIMGA	(Con) Reasons to Disassociate with WIMGA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Financial support of local associations via grants; WCMGA has been the recipient of grants in past years as follows:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2016-\$400 Butterfly Garden at Miravida</li> <li>○ 2017-\$250 Morgan House; \$100 WESD</li> <li>○ 2018-\$100 Speaker fees</li> <li>○ 2019-\$250 Park View plants; \$400 Butterfly garden at Miravida</li> <li>○ 2020-\$400 Park View cutting garden; \$250 Butterfly garden at Miravida</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· \$5.00 dues can be utilized directly by WCMGA for projects/education instead of going through WIMGA.</li> <li>· WCMGA currently does not have a representative to WIMGA. The last report from a WCMGA representative regarding WIMGA was January, 2020.</li> <li>· Official communication/updates regarding the Wisconsin Master Gardener Program come from the State Program office at UW-Madison Division of Extension.</li> <li>· Per a conversation with the outgoing President of WIMGA in February, 2021:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ WIMGA is struggling with identity, the reason for existing and what they do for various associations.</li> <li>○ Minnesota and Iowa do not have a WIMGA-like organization for their MGVA associations.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



## Jumping Worm Research Survey Launches

Seeing a need to learn more about the impacts of jumping worms in gardens and home landscapes, the UW-Madison Arboretum is launching a research study to crowdsource information and experience about jumping worms. The survey is open through November 15.

Once you click this link, scroll down about 5 paragraphs for the "survey" link.

[https://arboretum.wisc.edu/news/arboretum-news/jumping-worm-survey-launch/?utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=enews\\_october-news-2021](https://arboretum.wisc.edu/news/arboretum-news/jumping-worm-survey-launch/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=enews_october-news-2021)

## Continuing Education Opportunities

By Linda Werner

**Four Seasons Gardening Webinar Series** by the Illinois Extension Horticulture team. On select Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. Free but registration required by clicking on the link for each webinar. Space is limited

### **The Nuts and Boles of Tree Identification, October 19**

Illinois is home to hundreds of native and non-native tree species, but identifying them isn't always easy. Besides leaves, bark, twigs, buds, flowers, boles, and fruit can also be helpful in identification. Gain confidence in your tree ID abilities by joining Horticulture Educator Sarah Vogel to learn how to recognize tree species based on the size, shape, and appearance of tree parts and their scientific names. Click here: <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=23881>

### **Tree Root Collar Disorders, November 30**

A root collar is an important area of a tree where root tissue shifts to trunk tissue. Impacts to this part of the tree can have a variety of symptoms from yellow foliage and early fall color to dieback in the upper canopy, and even tree death. Horticulture Educator Ryan Pankau will explore how to prevent, identify, and treat common tree root collar disorders.

**NOTE:** Each program is recorded and available to watch on the [Illinois Extension Horticulture YouTube channel](#). Videos are available about two weeks after the live program. Click here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEYBGqFXZS6Sn37n1mVcY1g>



## WCMGA Projects

*Check your Member Guide for contact information.*

Project	Project Lead(s)
Butterfly Garden Miravida Living Oshkosh	Jane Kuhn
Carter Memorial Library, Omro	Jenny Breining
Coughlin Rain Garden	Ed and Jill Dombrowski
Octagon House, Neenah	Jerry Robak
Invasive Species	Valerie Stabenow/Sue Egner
Morgan House	Kathy Schultz
Neenah Public Library	Susan Forbes/Bette Hoytink
Oshkosh Area Humane Society	Julie Miller/Matt Miller
Oshkosh Farmer's Market	NEEDS LEADS!
Paine Gardens & Arboretum	Virginia Slattery
Park View Cutting Garden	Donna Kudlas/Jane Kuhn
Park View Prairie Garden	Carol Swannell/Ruth Eberwine
Park View Flower Arranging	Lil Hansche/Diane Thompson
Park View Vegetable Garden	Tom Weber (with assistance from Renee Donner)
Plant Health Advisors	Mary Shepard
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.

October 2021						
Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 						

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