

Take Time for Some Garden Fun

By Nancy White Several garden events are planned soon by other Master Gardener groups and Purdue Extension Offices. These events offer items for sale and information on vendors, gardening clubs, and societies. Events that qualify for education hours credit are noted.

Saturday, April 4, 9:00-4:00, *Gardening for all Ages* free show at Hendricks County 4H Fairgrounds, Danville, IN, sponsored by the Hendricks County MGs; education programs are offered. For information, call 317-852-5973.

Saturday, April 18, 11:00 a.m., *Miss Potter's Tea Party* at TC. Steele State Historic Site, features tea party and craft making; charge is \$15.

Tuesday, April 28, 6:30 pm, lecture by Susan Wittig Albert on gardening with herbs, at T. C. Steele Historic Site, no charge

Saturday, May 2, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., *Garden Celebration* at Scott Hall, Johnson County Fairgrounds, Franklin, IN, sponsored by the Johnson Co. MG; education seminars are offered.

Saturday, May 2, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. and Sunday, May 3, 10:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m., Plant Sale at Vanderburg County 4H Center, Boonville/New Harmony Rd., Evansville, IN. Sale features thousands of annual and perennial plants, many natives, grown in the Southwestern IN Master Gardener Display Gardens. For information, call 812-477-7378.

Saturday, May 9, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Garden Gala at T. C. Steele Historic Site, featuring plant sale, tours, and herb cooking demo at 11:00 a.m. with Amy Thompson.

Saturday, June 13, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. and Sunday, June 14, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., *Nature's Kaleidoscope Garden Walk* in Vanderburg and Warrick Counties, sponsored by Southwestern IN Master Gardeners; charge is \$12 and includes visit to MG Display Garden. For information, call 812-490-2199.

Help Needed to Guide Elementary Students



Submitted by Amy Thompson

On Thursday, April 23, from 8:45 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., volunteers are needed to help guide elementary students in the planting and mulching of seedling trees at Batchelor Middle School's Tree Fest - Tree Planting. Batchelor Middle School is located at 900 W. Gordon Pike, Bloomington, IN 47403

Lunch will be provided by Bloomington Parks and Recreation. Volunteers will meet at 8:45 a.m. at the school and finish about 2:00 p.m. To allow planning for food, please sign up in advance. Contact Cathy Meyer at 349-2800 or cmeyer@co.monroe.in.us.

Member News



Recently, the Master Gardener board approved the appointment of Jeff Schafer as our vice president for education. Jeff replaces Carol Cobine, who resigned the position. We welcome Jeff to the board and appreciate that he brings energy, enthusiasm, and many skills to the group.

By **Larime Wilson Chairs Cheryl's Garden Committee**

Nancy
White

We regret that last month we omitted the name of Larime Wilson as a committee chair. Larime is chairperson of Cheryl's Garden in Karst Farm Park

April 4 Field Trip Will Be Rescheduled

Because of the serious health condition of our guide, the IU tree identification walk scheduled for April 4 is postponed. We will try to do this walk at a later date.

Bob Baird and Moya Andrews Participate in Panel Discussion

On March 12, Master Gardeners Bob Baird and Moya Andrews were presenters at a garden panel discussion at the T.C. Steele State Historic Site. Several members of our Master Gardeners attended the program which focused on shrubs, perennials, and trees for our central Indiana gardens. Other presenters were members of the T.C. Steele staff who invited us to attend other events planned for the spring and to consider joining their volunteer crew.

Volunteer at Spring Mill State Park on Saturday, April 25

You are invited to join the **Invasive Species Volunteer Strike Force** work session planned at Spring Mill State Park on Saturday, April 25 at 1:00 p.m. This work of identifying and removing targeted invasive plants will be directed by the park naturalist staff and will count as volunteer hours. The parks can use workers for any amount of time you can give. Meet the group at the Nature Center in the park. Call 812-849-4129 for more information.

Make This *Folia and Flora* Correction

Please make this correction in your *Folia and Flora* membership handbook. Donna Terry's correct e-mail address is ddterry2@comcast.net. The address in the book is not correct.

Our Fifth Annual Garden Walk and Picnic



By
Mary
Hawkins

With all the flowering plants bursting forth this spring, we're reminded that our Fifth Annual Garden Walk and Picnic is coming soon! Please mark Saturday, June 13 on your calendar. This is the date for our annual fun, social, and educational garden walk and pitch-in picnic, scheduled from 3:30 to 8:00 p.m., rain or shine. Watch for further information in May and June's newsletters. Your official invitation will arrive in late May with all the detailed directions, RSVP information, and what to bring besides your desire to have a great time with all your gardening friends. Reserve June 13 on your calendar now, and plan to be part of the fun!

Demonstration Garden Spring Clean Up On April 14, at 6:00 p.m., MG board members and 2009 interns will do spring clean up in the Demo Garden at the fairgrounds. Bring gloves, rake, and favorite garden tools.

Deer-Resistant Plants for Your Garden



Interested in locating plants that deer do not favor? This website provides lists of plants by categories, such as trees, shrubs, perennials, or groundcovers, that may cause deer to lose interest in your yard:

<http://njaes.rutgers.edu/deerresistance/> .

Submitted This site rates a huge list of plants, using the following grading:

by
Jo
Prentice

A = Rarely Damaged	C = Occasionally Severely Damaged
B = Seldom Severely Damaged	D = Frequently Severely Damaged

The site is searchable, allowing users to sort hundreds of plant names by rating given above, by type (annuals, perennials, etc.), or by common or Latin name, a feature that is a great time saver. A sample of plants rated as *Rarely Damaged* include ageratum, Allegheny spurge, American holly, angel's trumpet, anise, hyssop, barberry, blue mist, and ajuga.

Another useful website for deer resistant plant suggestions is whiteflowerfarm.com/deer-resistant-plants.html. This site offers the caveat: "...there are no absolutely deer-proof plants. If the herd is large enough, and food is scarce enough, deer have been known to eat almost anything." This site groups plants under these headings: *deer resistant perennials for full to part sun*, *deer resistant perennials for full or part shade*, and *flower bulbs rarely damaged by deer*. Bulbs listed as rarely damaged include allium, colchicum, *Fritillaria imperialis* (crown imperial), galanthus (snowdrop), hyacinthus, narcissus, and scilla (squill).

Selecting plants not usually favored combined with other methods for discouraging deer, such as owning a dog, spraying plants with commercially prepared or home prepared substances, installing motion-activated water or noise deterrents, or installing a deer fence, may provide some garden peace for the coming season.

Hardy Gladiolas

Have you seen the beautiful, slick color advertisements of hardy gladiolas that do not have to be dug up in the fall, and wondered if it could really be true? Well you can't always believe everything you read, like tree tomatoes or vining strawberries, but this time they got it right! ***Gladiolus byzantinus*** or hardy gladiola is a species of gladiola related to the large-flowered, hybrid gladiolas commonly grown in the garden but are hardy to Zone 5.

Hardy gladiolas have narrower leaves than hybrid gladiolas. The flower spikes are 15-20" long with the 1-3" long flowers arranged on one side of the stem only. ***G. byzantinus*** has bright dark fuschia colored flowers which are smaller than the flowers of hybrid gladiolas, but make great, long-lasting cut flowers. Some cultivars have "butterfly flowers" with striking throat markings or blotches. Overall the plants are not quite as showy as the larger-flowered hybrid types, but they add an element of class and dignity to the garden. And best of all, they do not have to be dug up in the fall! Plant them in full sun with well drained soil.

From <http://extensionhorticulture.unl.edu/Articles/SJB/HardyGladiola.shtml>

Invasive Plant Removal at Spring Mill State Park



Submitted
by Diann
Lock

Plan to be a part of the Invasive Species Volunteer Strike Force on Saturday, April 25, at 1:00 p.m. at Spring Mill State Park. Volunteers will meet in the Nature Center and may join the strike force for an hour or up to three hours. Volunteers will combine forces to combat invasions by non-native plant species. A brief training session will teach why we want these plants gone and how to identify and remove targeted invasives before volunteers put this knowledge to work by assisting naturalists with invasive species removal. One of the main plants to remove will be wild mustard. For information, call the Nature Center at 812-849-4129.

2009 Master Gardener Field Trips



By
Vicky

Listed below are some of the proposed field trips for MC Master Gardeners for 2009. If you are interested in participating in any of these trips but did not attend the March 24 general meeting, please contact me. All field trips require that six or more sign up. Friends and neighbors are welcome. For locations near Bloomington, we will meet at the site. For more distant trips, we will car-pool from a convenient location in Bloomington. Trips are free unless noted. You will be notified of the trip details prior to the date. For more information on the trips or to sign up, contact Vicky St. Myers at vstmyers@hotmail.com or 323-7072.

Wildflower Foray, “Wildflowers at Selma Steele”, Friday, April 24 at 9:00 am., led by Kay Yatskievych, Wildflower Author; T.C. Steele staff member, Davie Kean; Tim Swinford, DNR Ecologist. 2 ½ - 3 hour walk

Wildflower Foray, “Wildflowers at Griffy Lake”, Saturday, April 25 at 1:00 pm. Led by Kriste Lindberg, City Park Program Specialist. 1 ½ hour hike at Griffy Lake Nature Preserve

(Several other Wildflower Foray Hikes, maps, and additional information can be found at www.fs.fed.us/r9/hoosier/docs/events/wilflowerforay)

Spring Mill, “Pioneer Garden Tour”, Saturday, June 13 at 10:00 a.m. Led by Spring Mill Naturalist, Jill Vance, 1 ½ hour tour. Spring Mill State Park in Mitchell. Charge: \$5 per carload to enter park

Van Natta Orchard & Beekeeping, tour of home orchard and beekeeping, on a Saturday or Sunday in late June, led by Master Gardener Chuck Van Atta and a beekeeper in Columbus; numerous varieties of fruit trees plus beekeeping lecture.

Willowfield, “Lavender Farm Tour”, tentative date is Tuesday, July 7, at 5:30 pm. Tour of lavender farm will be led by Libbe O’Connor, owner, Mooresville, IN, charge is \$1 per person.

Possible field trips for August

Stream Cliff Historic Herb Farm on a Saturday in August, features gardens, tearoom, and winery, located in Commisky, IN, 1 ½ hour trip from Bloomington.

Secret Garden- “Hidden Hill” – on a Saturday or Sunday in August; features rare trees and plants, garden sculpture, and whimsy, located in Utica, IN, 2 hour trip from Bloomington

Perfumes in the Garden



By
Susan

Eastman

Wearing fine perfume used to be a key part of dressing up. Men as well as women were characterized by the scents they wore as much as their hair, clothes and speech. Although the practice of dabbing on perfumes faded in recent years as people became aware of allergies (and attracting insects in hot Midwestern summers), many women still wear perfume on special occasions. Moreover, everyday hygiene products for both women and men contain many perfume-like scents, and often candles are perfumed to add fragrance to a room.

Generally speaking, those scents come from flowers. Most flowers we buy at O'Malia's or Kroger's for cut-flower arrangements—some aromatic, mainly not—come from large-scale farms in Bulgaria, Argentina, or Ecuador. Luckily, we can grow and enjoy many aromatic plants in our gardens.

Roses symbolize fragrance, among other things, but gardeners have learned to their sorrow that a large number do not have scents. For perfumes, damask rose is the central commercial contributor to fragrances but is generally raised in the Middle East. The recently developed roses for colder climates largely have little to no scent. Sadly, the much-beloved fairy roses and miniature container roses are in this group. But there are a few cold-adapted roses to take note of. Of the Rugosa roses (such as the *Knock Outs*), one yellow shrub called 'Radsunny' has a strong fragrance. Of the Canadian Parkland series, 'Cuthbert Grant' (red) and 'Morder Sunrise' (pink/yellow) stand out for their fragrance. Also, 'Quadra,' a Canadian Explorer climber, has a strong scent. We can certainly grow all these here. But if a particular rose is labeled as 'faint fragrance', that probably means you have to put your nose inside the flower head to smell anything at all!



Although we all think immediately of roses and lavender as sources for perfumed gardens, and flowers come to mind, several ordinary herbs, such as rosemary, basil, lemon mint, and mountain mint, add considerable fragrance to gardens. Many large herb gardens devote one section to these happily odiferous herbs. Among the many varieties of lavender, 'Munstead' is said to provide the most pleasant odor, and 'Perfume' is actually the name of a variety of basil.



While not all pleasantly perfumed flowers do well in Bloomington's moist climate, we do fill our gardens with lilies, many of which have delightful fragrances. The strongest smelling are the late-blooming Orientals, in particular, 'Stargazer', 'Starfighter', 'Red Hot Lily', and 'Shocking Lily'. Indeed, some people say these lilies are too powerful to have indoors. For more gentle fragrance, 'Rosario' is said to smell like candy; 'Henry's Surprise' smells like cream; 'Amarone,' 'Le Reve,' 'Elegant Lady, and 'Black Beauty' generate light pleasant aromas. (continued on page 6)



Perfume in the Garden (continued from page 5)

Several varieties of violets and verbena grow well here and smell good. Lemon verbena, for example, is commonly used in men's toiletries. Clove pinks and spice shrub are other possibilities for Bloomington gardens. Jasmine, delightful as it is, won't survive our winters unless brought indoors. And such other strongly scented flowers as passion flowers, ylang-ylang, and oleander don't survive here.

But what does grow well all over the Midwest are magnolias and mock orange, and both smell wonderful in spring. I have a now-giant 'Minnesota Snowflake' mock orange, and it blooms and blooms for a month or so, generating a lovely sweet fragrance all over my yard.



'Minnesota Snowflake' mock orange

If you are fan of wonderful smells, perhaps you also collect decorative perfume bottles. Vintage glass perfume bottles are highly collectable, and on winter days, you can sniff the old bottles to remind you of spring's flower scents!



LaPorte MGs Present Spring Symposium

Looking for a touch of spring? Plan to attend Spring Symposium on Saturday, April 25, 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (CDT) at St. Mary's Parish Hall, 101 Church Street, Otis, Indiana. Directions: Located off Rt. 421 between Michigan City and La Porte, a quarter mile north of the toll exit at Westville; turn west on Snyder Road for three-fourths mile; turn north on Church to 101 N. Church

Symposium schedule includes *Eat Your Landscape* at 9:45 a.m. presented by Jim Long; *New Plants for 2009* 10:45 a.m. by Bill Bolton; and *Building a Bentwood Trellis* at 12:30 p.m. by Jim Long.

In addition to the program, vendors and door prizes are available. This symposium counts as two and a half hours education hours for Master Gardeners. Cost (including morning refreshments and lunch) is \$25 in advance and \$30 at the door. To register, send contact information and check payable to LPCMGA to Marcia Wolf—Symposium, LaPorte County Extension Office, 2358 N. U.S. Hwy. 35, LaPorte, IN 46350. For information, call 219-324-9407.

In Love with Lilacs



“Come down to Kew in lilac time, in lilac time, in lilac time.

Come down to the Kew in lilac time (it isn’t far from London!)”

—Alfred Noyes, *The Barrell Organ*

Lilacs for the Garden by Jennifer Bennett, Firefly Books, 2002.

By M. Susan Osborne Lilacs, because they are the flowers of reminiscence, encourages you to close your eyes, take a deep breath, and imagine that wonderful fragrance every time you think of them. They are the plants you remember from your grandmother’s and grandfather’s gardens. And even though lilacs are not the shrub of fashion, they can be the perfect shrub for today’s discerning gardener.

Planting lilacs now can offer you something in the years to come, and once winter’s door is closed, you can anticipate enjoying the perfume of lilacs at your door.

The lilac’s roots come from Asia, China, and Japan, which tells you they traveled a long way in which to get here. When lilacs arrived in England, they were named *pipe trees* because of their hollow stems. The common lilac came ashore in North America via the settlers and now, more than 250 years later, some of the original immigrants still grow on Mackinac Island. Most lilacs are shrubs, but a couple are smallish trees. The foliage varies from large and un-toothed to the lesser known species that are small, compound, and feathered. The florets are usually fragrant, four petal and small, but born in large clusters. Lilacs belong to the family Oleaceae, the olives; its best known cousins are forsythia, jasmine, ash, and privet. All lilacs belong to the genus *Syringa* and are attached to a Greek legend. Lilac flowers are edible (like roses, violas, daylilies and others), have been used medicinally in Egypt, and to make tea in China.

Lilacs for the Garden consists of seven chapters which includes history; planning, planting and pruning; placement in the landscape; a species list of the usual and unusual; exotic lilacs and lilac aid—answering “why it won’t bloom!” Of course there are pages of photographs, which illustrate various stages, colors, and shapes. Bennett’s book offers special interest inserts highlighting unique topics such as Greek legend, lilacs indoors, fragrance, fall color, foliage and other topics of appeal. All chapters discuss the many varieties and offer information specific to the chapter subtopics. For example, in Chapter Three, she has a section on “Bloom Time” where she discusses bloom time and then lists the bloom sequence for twenty-two varieties. A lot of Latin is used in *Lilacs for the Garden*, but she balances this with common names so reading is fairly easy. Chapters Four and Five offer the most extensive listings and information about lilacs. The book also offers a source listing for the United States and Canada.

Lilacs for the Garden is a compendium of essential information and an invaluable resource. I would encourage lilac lovers to consider reading and even add it to your gardening library. I believe you will find it to be most informative as well as enjoyable to read.

Companion Plants for Containers Plant marjoram, savory, thyme, rosemary, and culinary sage for a colorful, tasty combination. For flowers in a sunny location, try a light green sweet potato (*ipomoea*), pennisetum, coleus, agastache, and sunny yellow dahlias. Petunias, verbena, calibrachoa, and lobelia are also a great combination.

Large Attendance at the March General Meeting

By Nancy White Over 50 members, interns, and guests attended the March 24 general meeting. Several members received their badges and certificates in recognition of their achievements as Master Gardeners. Congratulations to new certified members Diann Lock, Katherine Wallskog, and Mona Visnius. Gaining advanced level were Vina Kinman, Reba Butler, Karen O'Brien, Bethany Murray, Ed McEndarfer, Gretchen Scott, Linda Burke, and Jeanie Cox. Bronze advanced level new members were Susan Eastman and Charlotte Griffin.

Also at the meeting, members signed up for some of the interesting field trips planned this year, including opportunities at the April Wildflower Foray. If you were not at the March 24 meeting and would like to sign up to be contacted about fieldtrips, contact Vicky St. Myers.

Mary Jane Hall reviewed the progress so far on the "Bloomington in Bloom" project and gave an historical and structural framework for the 2009 preparations and events in 2010. This will be a very large undertaking and will benefit from the involvement of many community and garden groups. "Bloomington in Bloom" is sponsored by the Mayor's Office, the Bloomington Parks and Recreation, and the Board of Realtors. She urged us to start now to work with contacts in our neighborhoods, clubs, and Master Gardener groups to spread the word and energize us.

Greg Speicher, Director of Hilltop Nature and Garden Center, was our main speaker and educated us on "Color in the Garden." Greg stressed the need for good planning in our gardens before planting. He suggested sticking to a limited choice of colors and using the color wheel to get ideas for this technique. Garden catalogues are good places to get color and choice ideas and to lay out the design with pictures. Ordering things on-line can sometimes be best if plants are not available locally, he mentioned. Greg urged us to use more green and white as accents because those colors go with everything. Many suggestions were given for diversity in our planning and planting as well as understanding the importance of color to meet our personal design goals. Many thanks to Greg for his informative presentation.

Thanks also go to our refreshment committee, Jeff Schafer, Diann Lock, and John Behringer, for the tasty treats.

Tippecanoe MGs Win 2008 Exemplary Education Award

By B. Rosie Lerner, Purdue University Congratulations to Tippecanoe County Master Gardeners on winning the *2008 All-America Selections Exemplary Education Award!* This award is presented to one AAS Display Garden for each of three categories. (The three categories are based on estimated number of garden visitors for the growing season during which AAS Winners were featured to the public, category I is under 5,000 visitors/year.) Nominees are judged on their educational events, handouts, and photos of the Display Garden. More information about this award program at <http://www.all-americaelections.org/Exemplary_Education_Award.asp>

Congratulations to Jeff Phillips and his Tippecanoe County Master Gardeners!

Volunteer Opportunities Compiled by Nancy White

Location	Time	Jobs	Contact
Hilltop Garden and Nature Center	year around	various	Greg Speicher, 855-2799 or gspeiche@indiana.edu
Bloomington in Bloom Planning Committee	year around	various	Mary Jane Hall, 824-2762 Gretchen Scott, 330-7548
MG Demonstration Garden	seasonal	various	Bethany Murray, 339-8876, bethany.murray@gmail.com
T. C. Steele SHS	seasonal	various	Davie Kean, 988-2785
Cheryl's Garden	seasonal	various	Larime Wilson, 333-9705
Flatwoods Park Butterfly Gardens	seasonal	various	Cathy Meyer, 349,2800
MCMGA Horticulture Hotline	year around	inquiries and research	Amy Thompson, 349-2575
MCMGA Speakers Bureau	year around	various	Amy Thompson, 349-2575
MCMGA Newsletter	year around	writing, stapling, labeling	Helen Hollingsworth, 332-7313
MCMGA Web Site	year around	various	Barbara Hays, 332-4032
MG Program Committee Member	year around	plan MG programs	Vicky St. Myers, 323-7072 Jeff Schafer, 325-3130
Middle Way House	seasonal	various	Clara Wilson, 333-7404
Wylie House	year around	various	Sherry Wise, 855-6224
Mother Hubbard's Cupboard	year around	education, resource	Libby Yarnell, 355-6843
WonderLab Garden	2 times monthly	various	Nancy White, 824-4426

PLEASE WEAR YOUR NAME BADGE WHEN VOLUNTEERING.

Free Garden Program Presented by Hendricks County MGs

Hendricks County Master Gardeners present their 21st annual free garden show, *Gardening for ALL Ages*, on April 4, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., at the Hendricks County 4-H Fairgrounds, Danville IN. Free trees will be offered to first one hundred families, as well as free seeds, garden catalogs and magazines. Door prizes and instant winner prizes will be awarded. Master Gardeners will provide garden advice. Programs include bonsai, 2009 best plant selection, cooking with herbs, tools for the garden, and growing orchids. Children are invited to participate in a special children's activity area. All attendees may shop at the garden vendors. The purpose of *Gardening for All Ages* is to educate the community about the latest in gardening. Come and talk with Master Gardeners over a cup of free coffee!

For more information contact

Colletta Kosiba, 852-5973, kcolletta@sbcglobal.net or Rosie Lenihan, 839-0188, lenihrose1161@sbcglobal.net

Evansville MGs Sponsor Plant Sale

The Southwestern Indiana Master Gardener Association, a non-profit organization of approximately 300 active area members trained thru Purdue Extension Service, invites Master Gardeners to attend their Annual Spring Plant Sale, featuring 12,000 plants, including 40 varieties of tomatoes, as well as a large selection of annuals and perennials for both sun and shade raised locally by Master Gardeners.

The sale will be held on Saturday, May 2, 2009, from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. and on Sunday, May 3, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at the Vanderburgh County 4-H Center, Boonville-New Harmony Road, Evansville, Indiana.

The theme for this year's sale is Native Indiana Plants, and several varieties will be available to purchase. The sales area will be expanded to accommodate more veggies, varieties of ferns, heirloom iris, and easier shopping. We will have Master Gardeners presenting garden topics every hour beginning at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday. Topics include Medicinal Herbs, Sedum Container Gardening, Weather Lore and Gardening, Tomatoes 101, Gardens to Go (container gardening with tomato, pepper, and herb plants), Native Plants, and Trees after the Storm.

Proceeds from the plant sale go directly back into varied projects and 22+ gardens cared for by volunteer Master Gardeners throughout the Evansville area. These gardens include the Reitz Home Garden, University of Evansville Rose Garden, Mesker Zoo Gardens, Newburgh Park Gardens, and the Master Gardener Display Gardens.

For information, contact Delores Mason, Publicity Chairperson (812-477-7378)

Have you noticed? Articles in newspapers, magazines, and catalogs highlight growing vegetables and herbs mixed in perennial beds, in square foot gardens, and in containers.

Gum Balls and Marbles



Each spring, collections of gum balls under foot are a hazard akin to standing on collections of over-sized marbles. One sweet gum ball tree (*Liquidambar styraciflua L.*) can produce prodigious numbers of one to two inch globe-shaped, spiny fruits referred to as gum balls. Wind and critters scatter them. Uncollected, these long-lasting gum balls lodge themselves in lawns, gardens, and in and under shrubs.

By Helen Hollingsworth Safety under foot and yard tidiness require that gum balls be collected and removed each spring. One way, if you live next door to a sweet gum tree and don't have too many, is to hand collect, filling a container while inspecting your yard and garden. For larger numbers, try a leaf rake and a garbage can. When hand collecting or raking, be sure to walk the same area twice, once in each direction. Gum balls seem to multiply! An area empty of gum balls while walking one direction will seem full when walked again in the opposite direction.

One booth at the Indianapolis Flower and Patio Show does a brisk business selling a gum ball collecting tool, which is a long-handle attached to an oval cage made of wires spaced about half-inch apart. Raking the cage over gum balls causes the wires to spread and collect. A release gadget allows emptying the collected balls into a container.

What to do with collected gum balls? The hard, spiny exterior is attractive, so perhaps spray them with gold paint and place in a glass bowl for a holiday decoration. No gravel or small rocks on hand for drainage before filling a pot when planting annuals this summer? Try a handful of gum balls! The advantage is that, in the fall, you can throw the entire contents of the pot into the compost without having to search out the gravel or rocks. Short on mulch to place around a newly planted tree? Mulch with gum balls! Gum balls are long-lasting, the right color, and likely to keep human beings away from the tree. But beware of gum balls and playful puppies! Puppies have been known to swallow gum balls, resulting in a whopping vet bill.

New Home Fruit Production Guide Now Available

By B. Rosie Lerner, Purdue University A new Home Fruit Production book, *Midwest Home Fruit Production Guide*, is now available from The Ohio State University. This wonderful new resource is available to purchase from OSU's e-store for just \$9.50, plus \$5.06 shipping and handling. <<http://estore.osu-extension.org/productdetails.cfm?PC=2174>>

You can also view an online version of the book if you want to browse before you buy.

<<http://ohioline.osu.edu/b940/index.html>>

I've only had a chance to quickly browse, but looks to be an excellent resource for Indiana, though there are some specific references to Ohio conditions, very similar to Indiana. There are chapters on the commonly grown tree fruits and small fruits, but also a chapter on the less commonly grown crops such as pawpaws, quince, hardy kiwi, persimmons, etc., and sources for buying planting stock.

Cooperative Extension Service
Health Building
119 West Seventh Street
Bloomington, IN 47404

FIRST CLASS MAIL
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**Looking for volunteer hours?
Check out the opportunity on page one
as well as those listed on page nine!**

2009 MCMGA Board

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