



# Roots and Shoots

Volume 29, Issue 1



## Wild life program at general meeting

By Evelyn Harrell

Please remember to join us for the first general meeting of 2013 on January 22 at 6:30 p.m. at the extension office. Master Gardener and newly elected vice president of education, Sandy Belth, will present a program titled *Living in Harmony with Wild Life*. It promises to be thought-provoking. The program counts for two education hours. Also, plan to pick up your copy of the new *folia and flora* which will be hot off the press, and every copy that is hand-delivered saves a lot on postage expense. Committee sign-up opportunities will also be available.

Members of the January refreshments committee are Linda Emerson, Robin Nordstrom, and Pam Hall. If you have not contacted Susan Lovell, newly elected vice president of programs, about helping with general meeting refreshments, you can contact her at [smlovell@indiana.edu](mailto:smlovell@indiana.edu) or 369-8839. Help with refreshments is needed at each general meeting, and it's a win-win: increased enjoyment for the members and more volunteer hours for you!

If weather becomes an issue, listen to local radio stations to learn of any cancellations.

## Inside this issue:

<i>Member news</i>	2
<i>What goes into compost?</i>	2
<i>Orchards class offered</i>	3
<i>A garden get-away</i>	3
<i>Garden Fair news</i>	4
<i>Ice melters</i>	5
<i>Shade Savvy at IMA</i>	5

## Special points of interest:

- 2013 Plant of the Year is announced
- What Garden Fair committee are you on? Check the list
- Some ice melters are less harmful to plants.
- Learn what belongs in the compost bin
- Opportunities abound for education hours this winter

### Hats off!



### New badges!

Abe Morris—certified  
Keith Barnhardt—advanced  
Diana Young—gold

**Congratulations!**

## Member news



By Evelyn Harrell

One of my daughters remarked recently that 2013 sounds so futuristic, and that struck my fancy. One online dictionary definition describes *futuristic* as innovative and expressing a vision of the future. This is exactly what your board will strive to be in 2013—visionary and innovative. That does not mean changing a lot of things that are already working well. It may mean that we as an organization will fine-tune what we already do well, in order to better serve our members and our communities. The first 2013 board meeting is Monday, January 7 at 6:30 p.m. at the extension office. Members are invited to attend any board meeting, but do contact Amy Thompson in advance to ensure adequate number of hand-outs.

### **Many thanks to retiring MCMGA board members**

With the advent of 2013 we say goodbye to Nancy White as board president and welcome her gratefully and with open arms to the board in her new position as past president. In her submission to December's *Roots and Shoots*, Nancy used these words: *civic-minded, generous, hard-working, and capable*. She was describing the Master Gardener organization, but those words also describe Nancy. She leaves enormous shoes to fill. Fortunately, she will continue on the board where she will continue to challenge us to be our best.

We also say goodbye to Herman Young, Marilyn Brinley, and Barbara Hayes who have retired after years of providing good advice and historical knowledge. They will be sorely missed.

### **MCMGA accomplishments bloom in past four years**

This space in *Member News* will continue to provide you with the kind of information you've come to expect in this newsletter, but for the moment it is worth repeating some of the accomplishments as noted by Nancy in the December issue: an increased presence at the Monroe County Fair; the Garden Fair that has become an anticipated community event in just three years; new bylaws to help us stay the course; a new publicity brochure; and we continue to enjoy high quality speakers and the mentoring of a new intern class.

### **What goes into the compost bin?**

grass clippings, garden plant trimmings/clippings, shredded leaves/stems/twigs, kitchen vegetable/fruit waste, tea bags, coffee with filters, egg shells, grains, corn husks, shredded non-colored paper/cardboard, barnyard manure (horse, cow, chicken)

### **What does not go into the compost bin?**

herbicide-treated plant materials, diseased plants, seed heads or roots of invasive plants, pet (cat, dog, bird, rodents) feces, oil or shortening, meat scraps, pineapple or citrus peelings, shredded waxed or color paper

# Certificate in the Organic Management of Orchards

Submitted by Amy Thompson



Learn how to use organic methods in the management of orchards and earn COMO certification. The class covers site selection and modification, soil evaluation and amendment, orchard floor management, cultivar selection, grafting, pollination requirements, planting techniques, pruning, insect pest monitoring and management, plant pathology and disease control, irrigation, fertilization, and harvesting and fruit handling. Optional field trips and hands-on training opportunities are included. Passing a final examination is required for certification, but anyone may take the course for personal enrichment without taking the exam. A reference notebook is included in the fee for the class. Co-sponsored by Hilltop Garden and Nature Center. For more information or to register, visit [Bloomington.in.gov/parks](http://Bloomington.in.gov/parks) or call 349-3700.

**Date:** Tuesdays, January 15-March 5 (8 sessions), 6:30-8:30 p.m.

**Registration deadline:** January 11

**Cost:** \$95 in city / \$117 out of city

**Ages:** all ages

**Location:** Hilltop Garden and Nature Center

**Instructor:** H. Michael Simmons

## A garden get-away

Sometimes a day spent visiting a botanical garden is just the thing to cure winter blues. Fortunately, we have some nearby choices. Location and hours are available on each garden's website.

- White River Gardens and Hilbert Conservatory, Indianapolis, Indiana
- Garfield Park Conservatory, Indianapolis, Indiana
- Holcomb Botanical Garden, Butler University, Indianapolis, Indiana
- Clegg Botanical Gardens, Lafayette, Indiana
- Wellfield Botanic Gardens, Elkhart, Indiana
- Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, Ft. Wayne, Indiana
- Chicago Botanic Garden, Glencoe, Illinois
- Cleveland Botanical Garden, Cleveland, Ohio
- Missouri Botanical Gardens, St. Louis, Missouri

# Garden Fair in your future

By Nancy White



Be sure you have our 2013 Garden Fair, Saturday, April 6, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. on your calendar. We have chosen a date earlier than our date last year to attract some additional quality vendors who would like to join us. The Garden Fair set up date is Friday, April 5. Doors will be open 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Note that the time given in the December *Roots and Shoots* was inaccurate.

The site is again the National Guard Armory on south Walnut Street. Our vendors are pleased with this space, and attendees mentioned the convenient location as a plus. You can help by spreading the word to any vendors, commercial or non-profit, who are connected in some way to horticulture, landscaping, or gardening. This year, Karen King is our vendor chair, and she would be pleased to send fair information to any possible vendor. Her contact is by e-mail at [mastergardenerkaren@yahoo.com](mailto:mastergardenerkaren@yahoo.com) or phone at 369-4299. If registered by March 6, vendors will pay a reduced price fee.

Committee chairs are planning their part of the fair during the winter months. If you have not already volunteered for a committee, please do so by contacting fair coordinators David Dunatchik, Jeff Schafer, or Nancy White. Committees that need more members are as follows:

- **physical arrangements** whose work includes setting up the space on Friday, April 5; helping with take down on fair day; and assisting with early arrangements
- **publicity** whose work is to charge of distributing posters in late March; help with yard signs; and contact local media as we get closer to fair time
- **education** who has the responsibility of helping to arrange the seminars prior to fair day plus working on site on fair day)

Please volunteer! If we all contribute our time and talents, the fair will be a rousing success. Below are committee lists as of January 1.

**Physical Arrangements**  
David Dunatchik, Chair  
Dorothy Wilson  
Marilyn Bourke  
Herman Young

**Vendors**  
Karen King, chair  
Susan Lovell  
Peggy Reis-Krebs

**Educational Seminars**  
Jeff Schafer, chair

**Publicity**  
Nancy White, chair  
Sandy Belth  
Bob Baird

**Master Gardener Info Booth**

Susan Eastman, chair  
Sandy Belth  
Marilyn Bourke  
Susan Sachtjen  
Don Sachtjen

**Financial**  
Diana Young, chair  
Robin Nordstrom  
Dorothy Kiser  
Beth Murray  
Marilyn Brinley

**Door Prizes**  
Judy Hawkins

**Master Gardener Sales**

Barb Cappy, chair  
Dale Wilkens  
Herman Young  
Pam Hall

**Café**  
Evelyn Harrell, chair  
Cindy Benson  
Donna Terry  
Vina Kinman  
Mary Hawkins  
Jackie Gilkey  
Barb Stork  
Trish Gustaitis

# Ice melters

Submitted by Amy Thompson

Five main materials are used as chemical de-icers: calcium chloride, sodium chloride (table salt), potassium chloride, urea, and calcium magnesium acetate. Calcium chloride is the traditional ice-melting product. Though it will melt ice to about  $-25^{\circ}\text{F}$ , it will form slippery, slimy surfaces on concrete and other hard surfaces. Plants are not likely to be harmed unless excessive amounts are used.

Rock salt is sodium chloride and is the least expensive material available. It is effective to approximately  $12^{\circ}\text{F}$  but can damage soils, plants and metals. Potassium chloride can also cause serious plant injury when washed or splashed on foliage. Both calcium chloride and potassium chloride can damage roots of plants.

Urea (carbonyl diamide) is a fertilizer that is sometimes used to melt ice. Though it is only about 10% as corrosive as sodium chloride, it can contaminate ground and surface water with nitrates. Urea is effective to about  $21^{\circ}\text{F}$ .

Calcium magnesium acetate (CMA), a newer product, is made from dolomitic limestone and acetic acid (the principal compound of vinegar). CMA works differently than the other materials in that it does not form a brine like salt but rather helps prevent snow particles from sticking to each other or the road surface. It has little effect on plant growth or concrete surfaces. Performance decreases below  $20^{\circ}\text{F}$ . Limited use of any of these products should cause little injury.

Problems accumulate when they are used excessively and there is not adequate rainfall to wash or leach the material from the area. Since limited use is recommended it is best to remove the ice and snow by hand when possible. When they are applied, practice moderation. Resist the temptation to over apply just to make sure the ice and snow melts. Keep in mind this can damage concrete surfaces as well as the plants and grass growing along the walks and driveways. These problems are normally latent and do not show up until spring or summer.

From <http://www.hfrr.ksu.edu/doc3580.ashx>

## Treat yourself on Valentine's Day

Plan to attend *Shade Savvy* on Thursday, February 14, 7:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m., at Indianapolis Museum of Art. This day-long symposium features five regional and national experts to discuss the challenges and joys of growing plants in the shade. Registration is \$100 and includes program, morning refreshments, a buffet lunch, and afternoon refreshments. Visit [www.imamuseum](http://www.imamuseum) or call 1-877-462-8497 to register or for information.

# Winter education hours

By Nancy White

During the winter months when active gardening is difficult or impossible, the many seminars available within driving distance provide opportunities to gain some education hours and have some fun at the same time. Here are some you may want to consider.

**Thursday, January 24**, 5:30 p.m. registration, 6:00 p.m. buffet dinner, 6:45 p.m. program, *2013 Spring Garden Seminar* at The Beef House, Covington, Indiana, provided by Purdue Extension and University of Illinois Extension. Registration fee of \$20 (payable at the door) includes dinner, program, and two hours of education credit. Space is limited. RSVP to 765-364-6363 or email [walke229@purdue.edu](mailto:walke229@purdue.edu) by January 17.

**Saturday, February 16**, 8:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m., *Advanced Master Gardener Training* at Madison County 4-H Fairgrounds, 512 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Alexandria, Indiana. Event is approved for six hours of education credit. Program includes intensive gardening methods, miniature gardens, landscape design, and gardens of Italy. For information call 765-641-9514 or email [orick@purdue.edu](mailto:orick@purdue.edu).

**Saturday, February 25**, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (one hour behind our time), *Once Upon a Garden* presented by the Gibson County Master Gardeners at Princeton High School in Princeton, Indiana. Five hours of education credit are available with topics on landscaping, medicinal herbs, unusual plants, and constructing a patio garden from a wading pool. Registration is \$40 and includes breakfast and lunch. For more information, call Hans at 812-385-3491.

**Saturday, March 2**, 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., *Spring Tonic* presented by the Hoosier Hillside Master Gardeners at the Orange County Community Center 4-H Fairgrounds in Paoli, Indiana. Five hours of educational credit are available with topics on landscaping, annuals, wooded areas, gardening with physical disabilities, and the effects of our recent drought. Registration cost of \$35 includes breakfast and lunch. For more information call 812-278-6794.

## 2013 Perennial Plant of the Year announced

The Perennial Plant Association has announced variegated Solomon's Seal, *Polygonatum odoratum* 'Variegatum', has been selected as the 2013 Perennial Plant of the Year. This plant grows well in woody soil and is a wonderful companion to arum, ferns, brunnera, toadlily, astilbe, and hosta.



# In appreciation of bark

By Rosie Lerner, Extension Consumer Horticulturist, Purdue



The winter landscape may seem a bit bland at first glance. But if you look closely, you'll find that quite a few plants have interesting bark that is actually easier to appreciate without the distraction of leaves and flowers.

Bark often changes over time, so that a species that starts out with thin, smooth bark on twigs and young branches may become thick and flaky or change in color as the plant matures. Beautiful bark comes in many forms, including smooth, shiny, ridged, flaky, blocky or peeling.

**“...once you're more aware of bark as a character, you'll start to notice bark on many plants.”**

**Rosie Lerner,  
Purdue Extension  
Consumer  
Horticulturist**

Among the better-known candidates for ornamental bark are the birches, the paper bark birch (*Betula papyrifera*) most obvious. As the tree gets a few years of age, the outer white bark peels off in horizontal sheets to reveal reddish-brown bark beneath. There are several other birch species with attractive bark, including European white birch (*Betula pendula*) with white, non-peeling bark eventually mottled with black, sweet birch (*Betula lenta*) with shiny, reddish-brown bark and river birch (*Betula nigra*) with peeling, scaly bark mottled with cinnamon brown, beige and orange.

Some of the most beautiful bark belongs to the cherry (*Prunus*) species, many of which are lustrous, shiny and characterized by horizontal grayish-brown markings that are very distinctive. The native black cherry (*Prunus serotina*) has attractive grayish-black bark,

but, due to its prolific production of seedling offspring, can be quite a nuisance species. Nanking cherry (*Prunus tomentosa*) is a shrubby cherry with reddish-brown, shiny and peeling bark. But the best of all cherries is the paperbark cherry (*Prunus serrula*) with its rich, shiny, reddish-brown bark that peels with age to resemble satin ribbons. Sadly, this species is only marginally hardy in northern and central Indiana.

Japanese tree lilac (*Syringa reticulata*) is quite different from the shrub lilacs, distinguished by reddish-brown bark, turning gray and scaly with age, and has prominent horizontal markings similar to cherry bark.

Paperbark Maple (*Acer griseum*) is one of my personal all-time favorites, distinguished by rich, cinnamon brown peeling bark, especially breathtaking in winter with snow on the ground and backlighting from low-angled sunlight.

American hophornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*) is somewhat similar to shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*); its grayish-brown bark peeling in vertical strips that curve away from the trunk at the top and the bottom, remaining attached in the middle.

(continued on page 8)

## In appreciation of bark (continued from page 7)

The sycamore or American planetree (*Platanus* sp.) is noted by mottled bark with large patches of gray brown peeling away to reveal creamy inner bark. The London planetree (*Platanus x acerifolia*) has an even more distinguished bark, with creamy white, brown and pistachio green mottling.

Lacebark elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*) has a fabulous mottled bark of gray, green, brown and orange. Also called Chinese elm, this species should NOT be confused with the weedy, nuisance Siberian elm (*Ulmus pumila*).

Kousa dogwood (*Cornus kousa*) is another tree with outstanding mottled bark with gray, light and dark brown.

American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) is well known for its smooth, light gray to nearly silver bark. European beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) also has a smooth bark but is darker gray that ages gracefully.

Yellowwood (*Cladrastis lutea*) is a native species that is somewhat similar to beech bark character, though much smaller in height and spread. Another bonus is the fragrant white flowers in spring.

Turkish Filbert (*Corylus colurna*) develops a grayish-brown outerbark that flakes with age to reveal an orangy-brown innerbark.

Kentucky coffeetree (*Gymnocladus dioica*) has a handsome texture characterized by rugged dark brown, scaly ridges.

Sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*) is distinguished in both color and texture with reddish-brown, deeply ridged bark.

Black Gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*) is another native species distinguished by dark grayish-brown black bark that with age breaks up into a pattern of blocks.

American hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*) has a smooth, bluish-gray bark that lies over rippled hardwood below, giving the effect of flexed muscles. The European hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) has similar but grayer bark.

Though these are some of the more notable species with attractive bark, once you're more aware of bark as a character, you'll start to notice bark on many plants.

# Volunteer opportunities

Compiled by Nancy White

Location	Time	Jobs	Contact
Hilltop Gardens	year around	various	Charlotte Griffin, 345-8128
MG Demonstration Garden	seasonal	various	Bethany Murray, 339-8876 bethany.murray@gmail.com
Bloomington Community Orchard	seasonal	various	Stacey Decker, getinvolved@bloomingtoncommunityorchard.org
Cheryl's Garden at Karst Farm Park	summer	design and maintain	Nancy Fee, 332-1940
T. C. Steele SHS	seasonal	various	Davie Kean, 988-2785
Flatwoods Park Butterfly Gardens	seasonal	various	Cathy Meyer, 349-2575
MCMGA Horticulture Hotline	year around	inquiries & research	Amy Thompson, 349-2575
MCMGA Speakers Bureau	year around	various	Amy Thompson, 349-2575
MCMGA Newsletter	year around	write articles	Helen Hollingsworth, 332-7313
MCMGA Web Site	year around	various	Barbara Hays, 332-4032
MG Program Committee Member	year around	plan MG programs	Evelyn Harrell, 3390572 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	Stephanie Solomon, 334-8374
WonderLab Garden	2 times monthly	various	Nancy White, 824-4426
Hoosier Hills Foodbank	year around	various	Nicole Richardson, 334-8374

# Out and about

By Nancy White

The 2013 intern training class will be held January 31 to May 16 on Tuesday afternoons from 12:30-3:30 p.m. at the extension office. Be sure to spread this information to your friends and neighbors and urge them to contact the office to get registration forms. The class always fills up quickly so urge them to enroll now.

## ***Butterflies of Indiana* is available locally**

Have you seen the new field guide, *Butterflies of Indiana* authored by Jeff Belth with able assistance from his wife, MCMGA member Sandy Belth. If you weren't lucky enough to get one for Christmas, you can get one at Barnes and Noble and the Book Corner on the Square. Be patient because they sold out right before Christmas and new orders will be arriving soon. It is a wonderful addition to your library of gardening books, complete with educational materials on butterfly behavior, conservation, and where and how to look for butterflies.

## **Help spread the word**

MCMGA's 2013 gardening grant program will be coming up soon. If you are involved in a non-profit organization that could use some extra funding for a gardening activity, please notify the agency that the application forms will be available soon on our website. The applications will be accepted until March 1, with monies distributed after April 1. Last year MCMGA awarded eight grants for a total of \$2,000. Profits from our annual Garden Fair support this grant program.

## **New badges awarded**

Congratulations to Abe Morris for reaching certified status and to Keith Barnhardt for achieving his advanced badge recently. Diana Young has reached the gold level, and we honor her for this milestone.

## **Photo contest winners**

Master Gardener photo contest winners were announced last month. Kay Cunningham won first place, and her photo is featured on the front of our annual yearbook, *folia and flora*. Runners-up are Nancy Miller, Donna Terry, and Susan Eastman. You will see their photos on other Master Gardener publications during 2013. We had over 50 entries this year, and they all were lovely. Cheers to our winners and all who entered.

# What is loam?

By Rosie Lerner, Extension Consumer Horticulture Specialist

Gardeners are often advised that a loamy garden soil is best for just about all plants. But just what is a loamy soil?

Soil is composed of many particles of varying sizes. Soil scientists have classified soil particles into three major groups: sand, silt and clay. Sand particles are the largest and tend to hold little water but allow good aeration. Clay particles are very small in size and tend to pack down so that water does not drain well and little or no air can penetrate. Silt particles are medium sized and have properties in between those of sand and clay.

A loamy soil, then, is one that combines all three of these types of particles in relatively equal amounts. Loamy soil is ideal for most garden plants because it holds plenty of moisture but also drains well so that sufficient air can reach the roots.

Many gardeners complain of their garden soil being compacted and/or poorly drained. Heavy, compacted soil can be rescued by the enduring gardener. Add a good amount of organic matter, such as compost, animal manure, cover crops or organic mulch materials, each year as the soil is worked. It may take several years, but eventually the soil compaction will be improved. Although adding some sand along with the organic matter is acceptable, adding sand alone is not advised. The organic matter offers several advantages that sand does not, including increased water- and nutrient-holding capabilities, in addition to improved aeration.

**“Heavy, compacted soil can be rescued by the enduring gardener. Add a good amount of organic matter, such as compost, animal manure, cover crops or organic mulch materials, each year as the soil is worked.”**

**Rosie Lerner, Extension Consumer Horticulturist**

Highly sandy soils can be a problem since they do not hold much water and few nutrients, as well. Adding organic materials to a sandy soil will improve its ability to hold water and nutrients. You'll need to add at least a two-inch layer of material to make a marked improvement. This translates to about 17 cubic feet of organic matter to cover a 100-square-foot area.

And remember that soil improvement is a program, not just a one-shot deal. You'll need to continue applications at least once a year for several years to really change the nature of the existing soil.

**Monroe County Master  
Gardener Association**

Cooperative Extension Service  
3400 South Walnut Street  
Bloomington, IN 47401

Helping others grow!



**MCMGA General Meeting**

**Tuesday, January 22, 6:30 p.m., Extension Office**

**Program: *Living in Harmony with Wildlife***

**Presenter: Sandy Belth**

**2013 MCMGA Board**

**President:** Evelyn Harrell

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824-4426 nwhite38@hotmail.com

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**In the grow**

By Rosie Lerner, Consumer Horticulture Specialist, Purdue

**Q. I have a cat that has been digging up the soil in my houseplants. I read in a magazine that mothballs can be used to keep rabbits out of the garden, so I'm wondering if I can use them on the top of the soil to discourage the cat.**

**A. In a nutshell, don't do it!**

For more information on common misuse of moth-repellent products, see

<http://www.ag.purdue.edu/entm/wildlifehotline/Pages/pesticides.aspx> and <http://npic.orst.edu/ingred/ptype/mothball/index.html>.