

Roots and Shoots



Volume 28, Issue 6

June 2012

Join us for the Eighth Annual Garden Walk and Picnic



By Mary Hawkins

Special points of interest:

- This year’s Master Gardener Garden Walk features three fabulous gardens.
- Go out to the Demo Garden on Wednesdays, June 6 and June 13
- Got conifer dieback? Amy provides web sites to help you.
- Should you always dead-head? See Rosie’s response.
- Read Karen Sparks’ final *Web Castings* column

Our Eighth Annual Garden Walk and Picnic features three gardens, and in this issue of *Roots and Shoots* are delightful articles about each of our gardens written by participants and/or owners. It is always informative to hear about the gardens from the perspective of those who create and work there. We get a glimpse into who owners or participants are as people as well as their goals and dreams. A garden is such piece of artwork that just never seems to be complete, always a work in progress. And we have some beautiful palettes to see this year!

Here are just a few brief reminders. The date is Saturday, June 9, from 3:30—8:30 p.m. Since we are having a presentation at each of the first two gardens, we are asking that you arrive promptly at 3:30 p.m. at the WonderLab Garden. Mike Voiles, floor manager of WonderLab, will give a brief history of the garden and describe how the Master Gardeners have volunteered many, many hours ‘helping other to grow.’ Then at 4:40 p.m. at Dianne May’s garden, she will present a “how to” for a rain garden. Then we’ll arrive about 6:00 p.m. at Mary Jane Hall’s garden where we can slow down and relax at her shady retreat down by the lake.

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Directions for each of the gardens are in your e-vite. There is a new recommendation of how to get to Mary Jane’s garden (directions will be sent out in an all member email right before June 9; also you can find the directions in Mary Jane’s article, *Made in the Shade*, in this issue) so if you are unsure, you may want to car pool from the extension office. Nancy White has agree to lead the caravan from there and can take some members in her car.

Also, if Saturday, June 9 is a warm day, you may want to carry a bottle of water. Please remember to bring a dish [side dish, salad, or dessert] to share. Drinks, main dish (also for vegetarians) and cutlery will be provided at the picnic. Bug spray may be a good accessory since we will be in a wooded area for the picnic. Please park on Mary Jane’s side of the street.

Finally, it is always helpful to RSVP to your e-vite so we can provide enough seating and food, and please have a great day!

Member news

By Nancy White



An energetic group of Master Gardeners and guests gathered on May 22 for our annual Intern Recognition Meeting. After announcements, interns were introduced by Amy Thompson and welcomed into the group. Dan Pyle introduced our speaker, David Ray, who entertained and educated us on the specialty of growing giant pumpkins. Be sure to let us know if we have a giant pumpkin grower among us this year. Our annual plant swap concluded the meeting, and many plants were adopted and taken to new homes. Many thanks to the refreshment committee, chair Melissa Britton, Cindy Benson, Karen King, Beth Murray, Barb Cappy, Dale Wilkens, and Martha Tarbah, for such a nice array of treats at the May meeting.

Donna Terry wins MCMGA board scholarship

Donna Terry is the winner of the drawing for the scholarship to the State Master Gardener Conference in Noblesville on October 4-6. Congratulations to Donna. Applications for the conference as well as the schedule of classes and events are on-line at the Purdue website. All Master Gardeners across the state are invited to attend. This is a great conference, and education hours are available to those attending.

Two earn Master Gardener certification

Master Gardener badges were awarded at the May meeting to Karen King and Susan Lovell. Congratulations!

Earn volunteer hours at the Demonstration Garden

2012 Demonstration Garden coordinators have announced a June work schedule. Jeanie Cox is coordinator at the demo garden from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 6, and Dan Pyle is coordinator at the demo garden from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 13. All members are encouraged to spend some time in the garden at the Monroe County Fairgrounds whenever you can. Weeding and trash removal are needed right now. All time spent in the garden qualifies for volunteer hours. If you go, remember to park in the small lot by the Veterans Memorial, right inside Entry #3. Do not park in the driveway to the caretaker's house. Contact Dan Pyle, Jeanne Cox, or Diana Young for more details.

Pick up Monroe County Fair books at the extension office

Monroe County Fair schedule books will be available soon at the extension office. Call before you drop by to get one to make sure they are available. Diana Young and Esther Minnick have agreed to chair our involvement in the open class flowers, vegetables, and floral arrangements. Contact them if you can volunteer during the fair.

Jeff Holland to retire in June

At a recent meeting of the Monroe County Extension Board, Jeff Holland announced his retirement effective in June. We thank Jeff for his long years of service to the community and wish him well in his retirement. Jeff's successor will be named later in the summer.

WonderGarden a community gem

By Nancy White

Our first stop on our annual Garden Walk is the WonderGarden located downtown next to WonderLab Museum of Science, Health, and Technology.

Planned and implemented by landscape designer Laura Shively, WonderGarden has been an important community location since 2004. Laura and her professional crew maintained the garden for two years, after which Master Gardeners were asked to make it one of our volunteer sites. Each year, Master Gardeners educate and supervise volunteer crews of high school, IU, community, and WonderLab Museum volunteers. A team meets in the winter to plan dates and goals for the year. Work begins in March and continues into November.

The garden is divided into several sections that flow into each other. Original plantings have been maintained plus some renovations and additions have been added to specific spaces. The garden was originally a maintenance site for the Monon Railroad so the contaminated soil was removed. Many tons of new soil were arranged to simulate hills, a pond, an amphitheater to facilitate programs for youth and adults, and a walk among the tall conifers. Many of the visitors now enter the garden from the B-Line Trail and enjoy a peaceful lunch or snack among the plantings.

Perhaps the largest section is the prairie mound which is home to numerous varieties of native plants including monarda, cone flowers, gallardia, geum, rudbeckia, hollyhocks, penstemon, and salvias. Many varieties of grasses surround the pond area, accompanied by Japanese maple trees, an unusual variety of redbud, and a hawthorne. A small area on the west side is used for herbs and vegetables. This year a living sculpture of onions, peppers, and kale is thriving and will provide food for the critters inside the museum. Each of the sections was designed to have color and texture interest at all seasons of the year.

Everybody's home

By Dianne May

A stream ran through the neighborhood I used to live in, and every time it rained, I watched the water from the surrounding roofs and driveways pour into the storm sewer and from there into the stream. The banks were caving in under the storm water, tearing away vegetation and threatening a bridge. I started attending workshops in search of solutions. I learned about several, but one was not only helpful but charming. I fell in love with raingardens.

With the help of the county extension, I arranged for seven raingardens to be put in around the neighborhood. Some neighbors were bemused. One referred to them as "your rice paddies." But that was before plants filled the gardens with color.

(continued on page 4)

Everybody's home (continued from page 3)

Raingardens are magical. They purify water as they return it to the earth. They keep topsoil and chemicals from washing down to the Mississippi. Enough of them can help stop flooding without resorting to more drainage projects. And they are beautiful.

For me, raingardens were the first step. I admit I was guilty of Garden Profiling. There were Good Plants, the ones I wanted there. And then there were Critters—weeds, bugs, birds and animals that got in my way. My self-appointed task was to control the Critters. This was my yard.

But as I began reading about how raingardens, and gardens in general, work, I had to sit back in awe. I wouldn't be able to garden at all if it weren't for critters I'd never known about. Those one-celled guys out there in the soil work miracles. Can you turn sunlight into food? Plants do. I'd heard of the Web of Life, but once I started exploring it, I realized it was way beyond my understanding. What I decided to do is learn more about all the amazing creatures I'm surrounded by and learn to get along with them. We all live here.

My garden is *Everybody's Home*.

Made in the Shade



By Mary Jane Hall

Tucked at the end of Pointe Cove Road, my shady garden is characterized by layers of texture. After the spring blooms, many of them native wildflowers, have finished their show, the ferns and other green 'leafys' take over. Now blooming is a lily that was a gift to guests at a wedding several years ago. I brought home one bulb, and this year there are 22 beautiful mauve blooms.

When the garden walk committee visited, I remarked that I felt a big commitment to Liquid Fence this year since there are so many deer in the area. Then we walked outdoors, and there were two does staring at us! So goes the battle. I have given up on my original concept of a hosta glade and moved on to ferns!

I built the fire pit in 2008 re-using stone that had been under the deck. I collected additional stone from a quarry in Bedford.

The soil is of poor quality and the previous owner struggled with growing turf grass on the steep, shady slope. I abandoned the grass in favor of the shade garden. The east side of the back yard gets about four hours of sunlight, and I try to grow some sun loving plants in that spot. The rudbeckia and echinacea do pretty well there. However, they are pretty forgiving!

Directions to *Made in the Shade*, starting from South Walnut and Hillside: Go south on Walnut to Fairfax/Church (large green highway sign directing traffic to Lake Monroe). Turn left or east on Fairfax Road for 6.2 miles (it turns south after the Bloomington Speedway) past the Fairfax Inn to East Pointe Road. Turn right or west on East Pointe Road (there is a small causeway across the Sugar Creek inlet to Lake Monroe) to the first street on the left which is the entrance to Eagle Pointe and the Eagle Pointe Guard house. Tell the guard that you are Master Gardeners and coming to the Halls at 2825 Pointe Cove. Go through the gate and turn left immediately on to Pointe Cove Road. Continue to the last house on the left (2825). Park on the odd side of the street.

A new resource for identifying symptoms on conifers

Submitted by Amy Thompson



Purdue recently released a new publication titled *Stress Related Conifer Dieback*. This publication looks at all of the environmental and site factors that have been killing our pines, spruce, and other evergreens. It has some good color photos that help with identifying symptoms. You can download this publication for free from Purdue:

<http://www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/ID/ID-477-W.pdf>

Other publications to help identify evergreen problems can be downloaded from these sites:

Borers of Pines and Other Needled Evergreens (Purdue):

<http://extension.entm.purdue.edu/publications/E-256.pdf>

Tip Blight of Pine (Purdue):

http://www.ces.purdue.edu/extmedia/BP/BP_24_W.pdf

Juniper Tip Blight (Purdue):

<http://www.ces.purdue.edu/extmedia/BP/BP-29.html>

Yew Dieback (Purdue):

<http://www.ces.purdue.edu/extmedia/BP/BP-51.html>

Diseases and Related Problems of Evergreens (North Dakota):

<http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/plantsci/trees/pp789-1.htm>

Spruce Diseases in North Dakota:

<http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/plantsci/trees/pp1276.pdf>

Twig, Branch, and Stem Diseases of Pine (Kentucky):

<http://www.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/ppa/ppa16/ppa16.pdf>

Needle Cast Disease of Spruce (Iowa):

<http://www.ipm.iastate.edu/ipm/hortnews/2007/5-9/rhizosphaera.html>

July 17 is our next general meeting

The next general meeting of the Master Gardener Association will be July 17 at the fairgrounds for the final clean up and sprucing up of the Demonstration Garden before the Monroe County Fair. Refreshment committee members for the evening are Dorothy Kinser, Carol Reynolds, Kay Cunningham and Sylvia Smith.

Giant pumpkin program sparks interest

By Evelyn Harrell



Interns in attendance at the Master Gardener May General Meeting (pictured left to right): Sydley Skolnik, Paula Perron, Marilyn Bourke, Dorothy Wilson, Alex Kimmel, Erin Duff, Amy Thompson, Michelle Flick, Pamela Hall, Sylvia Smith, Cynthia St. Leger.

Members who attended our May 22 general meeting at the Community Building at the Fairgrounds were treated to a glimpse into the amazing world of competitive pumpkin growing. Even if you have never attempted to grow giant pumpkins and never plan to grow them, David Ray's presentation was informative and fun and tempting to get involved. David spoke enthusiastically of this 'sport' and answered many questions about fertilizers and management techniques that are required to arrive at a pumpkin weighing anywhere from several hundred pounds to the 2000 pound pumpkins that are sure to become the norm for competitive pumpkin growers. According to David, growing the one pumpkin left on the vine is just the first challenge, because then the Giant has to be transported somewhere to participate in the competition, and apparently, the transport is fraught with hazards. Learning about growing giant pumpkins was a fun learning experience.

The evening began with refreshments provided by Melissa Britton, chair, Larime Wilson, Cindy Benson, Karen King, Bethany Murray, Barb Cappy, Dale Wilkens, and Martha Tarbah.

The new intern class was introduced and recognized. The evening wrapped up with the annual plant swap with the usual wide assortment of plants to choose from, all of which made for a very enjoyable evening.

Remembering Gretchen Scott

Gardener Gretchen Scott passed away recently while staying with her daughter, Anita Robbins, in Virginia. Gretchen had endured an illness for over a year. She was always an active and generous member of our group, cheerfully volunteering and motivating us all to follow her lead. Her enthusiasm and leadership in the Bloomington in Bloom activity of 2010 paved the way for so many community improvement and beautification activities that remain part of Bloomington and Monroe County. She is missed by all who knew her. Condolences may be sent to Anita at 11forheaven@gmail.com.



Web castings

and their friends.

Some 'pre-digested' web offerings provided by local Master Gardeners

By Karen Sparks



So, it's goodbye for now.

Try to imagine this: how would you come up with themes for a column on websites about aspects/issues of gardening? My work on this column has been an interesting process! To come up with monthly ideas, I asked myself, *What are my current gardening questions or issues, based on the seasons, or what have I gotten myself into?* Sometimes I started there; other times, well, if you read this column, you know how it has varied.

Having a deadline works wonders for the imagination! Some months I am a total blank until that due date morning; others, I nail early. Probably the most unexpected aspect of this is that I receive no feedback from local Master Gardeners. I did envision this column as a collaborative effort (notice the subtitle) but received only one comment or suggestion in these many months. I would guess that others involved in the production of *Roots & Shoots* may be acting on faith as well; for me, the question has been, is this useful? (Yoo hoo... is anybody out there? Grinning!) Not complaining here, just observing. Think about letting others know how much you appreciate what they do.

This will be my last regular *Web Castings* column. Looking back, I have produced twenty monthly columns, and I refer you to the April 2012 issue for an overall index. I can't even begin to count the number of websites I have poked around in, narrowing them down, selecting the best I could find for you, not to mention the hours spent online; you may know how it is, time just flies by. I love it, but I need a break.

I may write a column occasionally, as themes or ideas surface, and will also report regularly on our new adventure, beekeeping. I will gladly write about that experience as it evolves. (We will have two hives; they are painted and decorated now, and the bees arrive within the next two weeks. Are we excited or what?!)

So, here's a shout-out to editor Helen Hollingsworth and web guru Barbara Hays, for their efforts and for the excellent results each month. I have learned so much just writing this column, but it pales when compared to the excellent information provided each month by all the contributors, especially Amy Thompson and the Purdue extension staff. Thanks all! We will connect in person, if not in print. Have FUN in the garden!

Hats off!



Members earn new badges:

Karen King, certified

Susan Lovell, certified

Congratulations!

BGC's annual Garden Walk is June 23-24

By Helen Hollingsworth



The Bloomington Garden Club's annual Summer Garden Walk is on Saturday, June 23, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and Sunday, June 24, noon to 4:00 p.m., rain or shine. Proceeds benefit children's gardening programs and civic planting and beautification projects. Annual Summer Garden Walk tickets cost \$10 and are available June 1- 24 from the following vendors or from Bloomington Garden Club members: Bloomingfoods East, Bloomingfoods West, Bloomington Hardware, Ellettsville True Value Hardware, Mays Greenhouse, and Monroe County History Center. For information, call 812-332-4163.

Master Gardeners participate in Best Spring Yard Contest

By Dot Owen



The third annual Bloomington in Bloom Best Spring Yard Contest is now complete, and we hope you saw the coverage by Carrol Krause recently in the *Homes* section of the *Herald-Times*. The contest was begun in 2009 by Gretchen Scott to introduce the public to Bloomington's competition in AmericaInBloom. The following summer the contest helped spur interest in Bloomington's beautification in preparation for the national competition, which Bloomington won in its category in 2010. Gretchen Scott led the overall charge in that huge undertaking.



An April winner in BSY Contest

Each week between April 22 and May 17, judge teams, assigned by to a post office zip code, toured the city in search of attractive front yards. Judges were assigned outside their own zip codes. Winners were asked to agree to a picture of their yard and their names and addresses to be published in the *Herald-Times*.

Master Gardeners played a major role this year in facilitating the event as captains and judges. Thank you to all who participated in making this project a success, and thank you for encouraging blooms and beauty in our community.

Serving as captains were Mary Jane Hall, Nancy White, Susan Eastman, Michelle Coxeter, and Dot Owen, who also served as coordinator. Judges included Paula Perron (intern), Mary Hawkins, Penny Austin, Sandy Belth, Judy Hawkins, Evelyn Harrell, Susan Lovell, Stephen Anderson, Amanda Harding, Sandy Belth, Karen King, Helen Hollingsworth, Moya Andrews, Susan Eastman, Donna Terry, Dale Wilkins, Sylvia Smith, Harriet Fulton, Parry Crites, Dot Owen, Ann McEndarfer, Nancy Page, Gloria Noone, Sydley Skolnik, and Mary Jane Hall.

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 and 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, 339-0572 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

Remove faded flowers? Yes and no!

By Rosie Lerner, Extension Consumer Horticulturist



Taking time to remove spent blossoms from your shrubs and garden flowers can pay off with more attractive, healthier plantings. The removal of dead flowers is often referred to as "deadheading."

Though it often seems like a big bother, pinching or pruning off dead flowers helps keep plants looking cleaner and prevents them from producing fruit and seed. This allows the plants to put more of their resources into root and foliage growth and development of flowers again next year or later this season, depending on the species. For plants that have a season of bloom, such as garden flowers, the formation of fruit and seed can signal the plant to stop flowering, since its job of reproducing through seed has been accomplished. Removing the blooms before the seed forms will encourage the plant to produce more flowers.

Most garden flowers can be pinched with the thumb and forefinger to remove spent blossoms or, for slightly tougher stems, cut with scissors. For shrubs such as lilac and rhododendron, it is best to use a hand-pruner to make a clean cut. Throw the trimmings onto the compost pile.

On the other hand, the fruits of some plants are part of the overall ornamental character, such as honeysuckle and viburnum berries, bittersweet fruit clusters, or money plant and hydrangea pods. The fruits of these plants can be left on until they fade and become unattractive.

Some gardeners like to collect seed to grow new plants from their garden favorites. Although many plants don't come back true to the parent from seed, you can find some interesting variations in your new seedlings. If seeds for propagation are your goal, leave the fruits on the plant until they are completely ripe and the seeds inside have become hard. Some seeds will need special handling, such as a cold, moist treatment, or perhaps a scratching of the hard seed coat, before they can germinate a new plant. Each plant species may have a different procedure for pre-germination treatment, so consult a reliable reference book or an experienced gardener to make sure you give your seeds the proper handling.

Earn education hours this summer

Submitted by Nancy White

The State Master Gardener office at Purdue has announced a class to be presented for Master Gardeners on July 14 at the West Lafayette campus. *The Basics of Landscape Design for Purdue Master Gardeners* will be taught by Anne Hildner, assistant professor for landscape architecture. There will be a registration fee for this class. If you are interested in being on the mailing list for more information, contact Dee Chitty, MG Program Assistant, at dchitty@purdue.edu.

Early heat wave challenges gardens and gardeners

By Rosie Lerner, Extension Consumer Horticulturist

The early arrival of summer's steamy weather is tough on garden plants and their gardeners. It is really difficult to stay motivated to keep up with garden chores when you're already dripping with perspiration by 9 a.m.!

Although the weeds, insects, diseases and critters don't seem to have any trouble thriving in this weather, some vegetable crops have trouble producing when under stress. Tomatoes, peppers, melons, squash, pumpkins, cucumbers and beans often drop their blossoms without setting fruit when day temperatures are above 90°. There's not much you can do but wait for cooler temperatures to prevail. As more favorable conditions return, the plants will resume normal fruit set.

Sweet corn is also likely to have trouble setting fruit in such hot weather. Unfortunately, you only get one flush of flowering with corn; so, if your plants just happen to be shedding pollen when the weather is stressful, you can expect poor ear fill later.

Cool-season crops, such as lettuce and spinach, will bolt—or produce—seed stalks, causing the flavor of the leaves to become bitter. It's best to remove these crops and replant with heat-tolerant vegetables, such as beans, carrots, or chard.

Newly set transplants will require more frequent watering and will benefit by shading from midday sun to avoid wilting. In some cases, plants will wilt during midday despite all your efforts, simply because the leaves are losing moisture faster than the root system can take up water. In this case, the plants should recover in the evening and morning hours when temperatures are cooler.

Extremes in temperature and soil moisture often bring on blossom-end rot, a dry, leathery scarring of the blossom end of the fruit on crops, such as tomatoes, peppers and squash. Irrigating during dry periods and mulching to conserve soil moisture will help minimize this problem.

Container plants out on the patio will really be stressed by the heat wave, since they have much less buffering of temperature extremes on the root system. In addition to watering more frequently in hot weather, provide afternoon shade, if possible, to help keep them a bit cooler.

The good news is that the weather is always changing. The extreme heat won't last forever—it will just seem like it! In the meantime, try not to overdo the garden work. Aim to complete your chores very early in the morning or in the evening when the sun is less intense. And take frequent breaks and drink plenty of water to keep yourself from wilting.

June 2012

FIRST CLASS MAIL

MONROE COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Cooperative Extension Service
3400 South Walnut Street
Bloomington, IN 47401



Helping others grow!

Eighth Annual Master Gardener Garden Walk and Picnic

Saturday, June 9, 3:30—8:30 p.m.

Enjoy three gardens, two presentations, great food and fellowship!

2012 MCMGA Board

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Master Gardener calendar

- **Saturday, June 9**, Master Gardener Garden Walk, 3:30-8:30 p.m.
- **Saturday, June 23**, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. and **Sunday, June 24**, noon to 4:00 p.m., Bloomington Garden Club Annual Summer Garden Walk
- **Saturday, July 14**, *The Basics of Landscape Design for Purdue Master*, at Purdue; contact: dchitty@purdue.edu
- **Tuesday, July 17**, 6:30 p.m., MCMGA general meeting, Demonstration Garden
- **July 28-August 4**, Monroe County Fair, Fairgrounds