

Roots and Shoots

Volume 30, Issue 9

September 2014

Monroe County Master Gardeners Association

General meeting on September 23

By Susan Lovell



Special points of interest:

- ◆ Many garden education classes are available in fall
- ◆ It's time to update your education and volunteer hours
- ◆ Submit your favorite garden photo to the *folia and flora* cover contest
- ◆ On Sunday, September 21, Angie Fender is inviting us to see her fall garden
- ◆ Read hints for dealing with fall leaves

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Please plan to join us on Tuesday, September 23 at the county extension office for our Master Gardener general meeting. The refreshment committee will have snacks and drinks available at 6:00 p.m. September committee members are Helen Hollingsworth, Susan Eastman, Mary Hawkins, Diane Gregory, Nancy Miller, and Karen King. Our meeting has a full agenda and will start at 6:30 p.m.

We are fortunate to have presentations planned by two speakers. Our first speaker will be Travis Dekoker, owner of Lavender Valley Farm, presenting *All about Lavender*. Our second speaker will be Heather Reynolds, IU associate professor of biology, discussing *The Garden Unseen: Subterranean Plant Interactions*.

A brief reminder about our November 11 annual harvest dinner: the dinner will once again be pot-luck. A sign-up sheet at our September 23 meeting provides an opportunity for volunteers to monitor the food tables to keep them orderly and also to help with drinks. Our speaker will be Linda Chapman of Harvest Moon Flower Farm. She will be discussing *Flower Arranging*. Looking forward to seeing you all.

***folia and flora* cover photo contest**

Email your favorite garden photos to Cindi Percifield at ckpercif@purdue.edu by Sunday, November 2.

Photos submitted for previous contests may be resubmitted for this year's contest, provided that the original files are resent to Cindi.

Member news

By Evelyn Harrell



Join us for a field trip! Master Gardener Angie Fender has extended an invitation to Master Gardeners to visit the Fender Farm on Sunday afternoon, September 21, at 4:00 p.m. Your guests are also welcome. We'll carpool the 18 miles from the Marsh North parking lot. Please be at Marsh by 3:30 p.m. to join the carpool. If it is more convenient for you to provide your own transportation, the address is 1494 Rocky Hill Road, Spencer. Angie will post some signage to help you find the turn to the shelter. The Fenders will provide beverages for refreshment. Angie says, "We have flower beds, a kitchen garden, clay pot people, canning room, and large vegetable gardens to view (what's left—weeds and all!) and if anyone wants to tour the Fender 4-Star Meat Processing with its wood carvings in the office area, that's also an option. We would very much enjoy having the club (and spouses, too) come out to see this beautiful shelter and unusual outhouse (real flushing toilet). It's a hoot."

Put September 23 general meeting on your calendar

The September 23 general meeting at the Extension Office is the unofficial beginning of the new year for Master Gardeners. There will be sign-up sheets in the hallway for a variety of volunteer hour opportunities in 2015. Just a couple of the important committees seeking members will be the committee to plan speakers for the coming year and a variety of committees to help with the 2015 Garden Fair. Our speakers who will provide us with educational hours are described elsewhere in this newsletter.

Remember to update your volunteer and education hours

If you have not used some of this recent rainy weather to stay indoors and update your Master Gardener volunteer and education hours, now is the time. If you are new to the software and could use some help, please call the office.

It's Master Gardener membership renewal time

On our website, www.mcmga.net, a form is now available for renewing your 2015 Master Gardener membership, and a copy of the renewal form is included in the mailed September issue of *Roots and Shoots*. Dues are \$10 per person and \$15 per household. The information that you provide on the membership application to indicate your interests in the association's activities is very important. We use this information to link you up with projects you enjoy and that interest you. To meet the timelines for our yearbook, *folia and flora*, we ask that membership renewals be returned by not later than November 1, 2014. Contact information for renewals received after December 31 cannot be listed in our membership book. Renew today!

Education opportunities available

Submitted by Amy Thompson



Want education hours? Here are some education sessions coming up.

September 7-13, times vary, Bloomington Lifelong Learning Coalition is presenting a week of programs, including *Urban Agriculture: A Reception, Produce Tasting, and Garden Tour*; *Food Chain: A Discussion of Policies Affecting the Bloomington Food System*; *Four Seasons of Container Gardening*; *Food Preservation Workshop: Fermentation*; *Incubating Community: Origins and Evolution of the Green Acres Neighborhood Gardens*; *A Composting Workshop*; *Looking Up: Sustainable Systems in Urban Spaces*; and *A Garden Clinic*. For information and registration, see Bloomington.in.gov/bllic and localgrowers.org.

September 15, 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m., *Rain Garden Workshop* at the Johnson County Extension Office, 484 N. Morton Street, Franklin. Presenter is Rusty Schmidt, and sessions include design, construction, planting, and maintenance. Cost is \$25 (includes lunch—no book) or \$35 (includes lunch and book, *Blue Thumb Guide to Rain Gardens*, by presenter. Register online at www.schmidtraingardenworkshop.eventbrite.com.

October 4, 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m., Hendricks County Master Gardeners are presenting 2014 *Adventures in Gardening* at the Hendricks County 4-H Conference Complex in Danville. Topics include *Perennials*; *Caring for the Land—The Root of Today's Conservation Efforts*; *Managing Invasive Species = Survival of Native Species*; and *Giving Back: Vegetables and Flower Gardens at the Plainfield Correctional Facility*. Cost (includes breakfast and lunch) is \$35—\$45 after September 26. Log onto hendricksgardeners.com for registration information.

October 9 and October 16, 6:30-9:00 p.m., *Fall 2014 Garden Lecture Series: Giving Your Garden Wings*, at Clark County REMC, 7810 State Road 60, Sellersburg. Presentations include *Gardening for Butterflies*; *Wildscaping*; *Hidden Horticultural Helpers: Bees*; and *Beekeeping*. Cost is \$20 (includes all four presentations and a light meal each evening. Registration deadline is September 17. Call 812-948-5470 for registration and information.

Hats off!



New badge

Peggy Rees-Krebs—silver

Congratulations!

Recipes and garden tips

By Sydley Skolnik



We are well into that time of year when the bounty is plentiful, and we are using recipes that use the harvest. Surely you have one you would like to include in the *Master Gardener Recipe Book*.

Tabuli is one of my favorites—using lots and lots of parsley, mint, green onions and tomatoes. There are any number of variations; mine never is the same. Crumbled cheese and kalamata olives are good options. Basil or cilantro might be a substitute for parsley. You can find the basic recipe for Tabuli on the bulgur wheat bag.

What is your tastiest experiment?

Tip: All your herbs can be grown in one or two big pots—placed near the door where it will be convenient, as well as beautiful.



Tip: Don't miss visiting Marion County Master Gardeners' Medicinal Plant Garden at the Indiana Medical History Museum in Indianapolis.

Jot down a favorite recipe, accompany it with a tip, or two and send to MGRecipeBook@yahoo.com. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Paula Peron, Pam Hall, or Sydley Skolnik.

Save the date

By Nancy White

Because of the early timing of Easter in 2015, the annual Master Gardener Garden Fair date has been moved back to Saturday, March 28. We will again be using the National Guard Armory for the site. Garden Fair 2015 will be the sixth year for the fair, and last year's event had our largest attendance and largest profit so far. The MCMGA grant program is sustained by the proceeds from the Garden Fair. This growing season we awarded seven grants to non-profit agencies for horticulture projects. One of the 2014 grant winning agencies will be at our September general meeting to thank us for our support. Show your support for the 2015 Garden Fair by signing up for a committee at our September 23 meeting. It takes lots of help to staff our annual Garden Fair.

Order fall garden supplies in bulk

Submitted by Evelyn Harrell

The Local Growers' Guild is a cooperative of farmers, retailers, and community members dedicated to strengthening the local food economy in southern Indiana through education, direct support, and market connections. Our mission is to create a local foods system that provides quality food to communities through direct markets and retailers; preserves the viability of family farms; improves the quality of life for growers; makes food issues visible; and promotes practices that preserve and protect the Earth.

Among many of the member benefits, one of growing popularity is the bulk order program. In the past this has been an annual spring order, where we use the purchasing power of members to order products such as soil amendments and cover crops at a whole sale price with a volume discount. We are looking at putting together a fall bulk order which would be open to members only. The spring bulk order is open to everyone (but nonmembers are charged a higher fee). Last year we had a community member purchase the supplies to build a greenhouse through bulk order and save over 50%!

You can find more information to join the LGG at www.localgrowers.org/join-the-lgg/.

2015 Purdue Master Gardener State Conference

The 2015 Purdue Master Gardener State Conference will be held on June 4-6, at the University of Southern Indiana in Evansville, Indiana.

These educational, enriching and fun-filled three days include four keynote speakers, 16 break-out speakers, pre-conference tours, a pre-conference BBQ dinner, a silent auction, a live plant auction, a banquet, and lots of vendors!

Conference information and registration brochures will be mailed the beginning of 2015 to all previous conference attendees. To add your name to that list or for additional information about the conference, please email: mgconf2015@twc.com with your name, address and email. (Please do NOT sent it to the MGLeaders distribution list.)

Plan to *Dig. Sow and Grow* with Master Gardeners in Evansville, Indiana, on June 4-6, 2015!

What's new in spring bulbs for 2015?

By Nancy White



Some would argue, but perhaps the most popular spring bulb is the tulip. Noted for its wide range of colors, its numerous varieties, and its bold show for several weeks in the spring garden, it also has an interesting past. The original “tulipam” was found in the wilds of central Asia. Carolus Clusius planted the first tulip bulbs at Holland’s Hortus Botanicus Leiden in 1593. Dutch growers have spent centuries hybridizing and cultivating the highly prized bulbs. By 1636, tulip bulbs were one of the top Dutch exports behind gin, herring, and cheese. But by 1637, when breeder bulbs become infected with tulip breaking (mosaic) virus, the industry almost collapsed. These multi-colored accidents we now call the Rembrandt series. No longer limited to production in Holland, the continuation of the tulip as a major part of the spring garden continues to today.

As a rule, most tulips are hardy for only a few years and tend to diminish over time. They are not true perennials and need to be re-planted every few years. That can become an expensive venture. But, there are some exceptions including Species Tulips, Kaufmanniana Hybrid tulips, Greigii tulips, and Giant Darwin Hybrids. Varieties from these species tend to come back for many years if they are happy in their location. Take a look at these long-lived tulips in your favorite catalogue or online. And remember to order early. The top sellers go fast.

Among the other spring bulbs available this year are some new colors in the Festival series of hyacinths which can have up to six stalks per bulb. These also can be forced well. Look for Anemone Blanda (Grecian Windflower) in pink purple, blue, and white which make a good groundcover and are deer-resistant. Also deer-resistant are the Chionodoxa (Glory of the Snow) that now can be found in both bright pink and deep blue, both with white eyes. For those who have lots of sun and might want to be adventurous with bulbs, try some of the Eremurus (Desert Candles or Foxtail Lily) especially the ruitter-Hybrid series which range from white to yellow to a new dark burnt orange with red stripes, truly a “car stopper.”

For other articles on spring bulbs and planting, see *Roots and Shoots* issues of September 2011, November 2012, and November 2013, available at mcmga.net.

In the grow: are native ladybugs still around?

By Rosie Lerner, Extension Consumer Horticulturist, Purdue



Q. I have been wondering for several years why don't we have any old-fashioned ladybugs? I know they disappeared about the same time Asiatic lady beetles appeared. I haven't seen any info on this, and no one seems concerned about it. Is there no concern for an endangered species? Or is it only our area that they no longer seem to live in? – B.P., Orland, Indiana

A. There are thousands of species of lady beetles in the world, and about 400 of them can be found in the U.S.! The multicolored Asian lady beetle was introduced to the U.S. a few decades ago and has certainly been successful in colonizing here! While mostly beneficial in eating insect pests such as aphids, they also are a nuisance because they like to spend the winter months inside our homes. They can also occasionally feed on ripe fruits and release a rather unpleasant odor.



Multicolored Asian lady beetles

(Photo Credit: Tim Gibb/Purdue Entomology)

To the best of my knowledge, our native lady beetle species are still present, but not as noticeable since they are content to overwinter outdoors under leaf litter.

For more information on lady beetles, see the following articles from Purdue Entomology: *Some Lady Beetles Turn Out To Be Stinkers*; *Asian Lady Beetle*; and *The 'When' in Asian Lady Beetle Control*.

Q. Could you advise me as to why the sweet gum trees are in such bad shape this spring? It seems that only the new growth has leafed out, leaving the rest of the tree pretty much bare. - L.S.

A. Like many other landscape plants, sweet gum is showing considerable winter injury this year throughout the northern half of the state. Many were very slow or failed to leaf out. In some cases, twigs leafed out but died back a bit later as summer heat stress came on.

Although this is the first time in my 30 years at Purdue that I've seen such widespread damage on sweet gum, this past winter was a very extreme winter. It is quite common to see this type of damage to sweet gum in colder climates.

There's not much you can do other than to prune out dead, damaged branches and hope that Mother Nature is gentler for the rest of this year.

Tomato troubles

By Rosie Lerner, Extension Consumer Horticulturist, Purdue

Despite the endless list of potential problems, tomatoes continue to be the most popular plant in Midwest vegetable gardens. Many tomato problems are related to environmental factors such as temperature and moisture, rather than insects or disease.

The most common tomato affliction is blossom-end rot, so named for the black, leathery scar that occurs on the blossom end, instead of the stem end, of the fruit. Blossom-end rot most frequently occurs when there are extremes in soil moisture. The uneven levels of moisture lead to a calcium deficiency in the developing fruit. Most soils in the Midwest have plenty of calcium, with the exception of very sandy or highly organic soils. Maintaining an even level of moisture with irrigation and mulching will help prevent blossom-end rot.

Another common problem is blossom drop. Tomatoes are fairly picky about air temperature when it comes to setting fruit. Tomato pollen becomes ineffective when temperatures are below 55 degrees F or above 90 F. Most early-season cultivars are tolerant of cool temperatures but may have problems with hot weather. If tomato flowers are not pollinated, they will drop off the plant. This year was slow to warm up, so early flowers may have dropped off. Now that summer is in full swing, tomatoes should be setting well, though predicted temperatures above 90 F with high humidity may again cause flowers to abort.

The thin skin of many tomatoes may crack open when excessive growth is brought on by rainy periods following a dry spell. To reduce the incidence of fruit cracking, water regularly during dry weather, and apply mulch to conserve soil moisture.

Catfacing is a term given to deformed, misshapen fruit. It occurs when days are cool and cloudy during fruit set. The blossom sticks to the side of the developing fruit, resulting in puckering. The early-set fruit this summer may exhibit this problem.

Sunscald is most common on immature, green fruit exposed to excessive sunlight, particularly during hot weather. It appears as a yellow or white patch on the side of the fruit facing the sun. Often, the tissue blisters and may eventually form a shrunken, grayish-white spot with a papery surface. Sunscald is often a problem on tomatoes that do not have good foliage cover. This can be caused by insect or disease damage, or by plants that sprawl unsupported and open from the weight of the fruit. Supporting tomatoes in a cage helps keep the fruit covered. (continued on page 10)

Volunteer opportunities

compiled by Mary Cusack

Location	Time	Jobs	Contact
Hilltop Gardens	year around	various	Charlotte Griffin, 812-345-8128
MG Demonstration Garden	seasonal	various	Herman Young, 812-322-5700 Jeanie Cox, 812-360-3587
MCMGA Garden Walk Committee	year around	select gardens	Mary Jane Hall, 812-345-3985
Bloomington Community Orchard	seasonal	various	Stacey Decker, getinvolved@bloomingtoncommunityorchard.org
Cheryl's Garden at Karst Farm Park	summer	design and maintain	Linda Emerson, 812-345-2913 (cell)
T. C. Steele SHS	seasonal	various	Anthony Joslin, 812-988-2785
Flatwoods Park Butterfly Gardens	seasonal	various	Cathy Myer, 812-349-2805
MCMGA Horticulture Hotline	year around	inquiries & research	Amy Thompson, 812-349-2575
MCMGA Speakers Bureau	year around	various	Amy Thompson, 812-349-2575
MCMGA Newsletter	year around	write articles	Helen Hollingsworth, 812-332-7313
MCMGA Web Site	year around	various	Stephen Anderson, 812-360-1216
MG Program Committee Member	year around	plan MG programs	Sandy Belth, 812-825-8353 Susan Lovell, 812-339-5914
Middle Way House Roof Top Garden	seasonal	various	garden@middlewayhouse.org or call Toby Strout, director, 812-333-7404
Wylie House	year around	various	Sherry Wise, 812-855-6224
Mother Hubbard's Cupboard	year around	education, resource	Kendra Brewer, garden@mhcfoodpantry.org
WonderLab Garden	2 times monthly	various	Nancy White, 812-824-4426
Hoosier Hills Foodbank	year around	various	Nicole Richardson, 812-334-8374

Remember to wear your badge when volunteering and keep a record of your hours.

Keep a copy of any volunteer records forms you submit to the extension office.

BP&R offers 2014 fall garden and orchard classes

The Community Gardening Program offers a variety of gardening and orchard management classes.

Classes offered include *Fall Gardening*, *Growing and Using Herbs*, *Introduction to Permaculture Patterns*, *Prepare to Keep Bees*, *Forest Garden Design*, *Fall Fruit Tree Planting Workshop*, and *Sex in the Orchard*.

Bloomington Community Orchard Classes are co-sponsored by Bloomingfoods, Bloomington Community Orchard, and Free University of Monroe County. Participants are notified if use of rain date is necessary.

Classes are available to all ages, and cost is minimal. Some classes have a registration deadline, so it is advisable to register early.

For more information, call 349-3700 or email hobsonr@bloomington.in.gov. To register for classes on line, please visit www.bloomington.in.gov/parks.

Renew your Master Gardener membership

Master Gardener membership renewal forms are available in print editions of *Roots and Shoots* and online at mcmga.net. Dues are \$10 per member or \$15 per family. Membership renewal forms are required by November 1 to be included in *folia and flora* 2015 membership guide, which will be distributed at our November 11 holiday dinner.

Tomato troubles (continued from page 8)

Yellow shoulder refers to areas of that stay green or yellow at the top of the fruit, while the rest of the fruit turns red. The tissue is actually damaged well beneath the skin. The cause of yellow shoulder is complex and thought to be related to soil pH being too high, extreme high temperatures, poor foliage cover over the fruits and insufficient potassium (sometimes brought on by too much magnesium). Some varieties seem to be more prone to this than others.

The good news is that these environmental problems are not infectious, meaning they don't spread to other fruits and plants.

What to do with all those falling leaves?

By Aaron Patton, Turfgrass Extension Specialist



It is that time of year when leaves are falling faster than you can rake them in many places. It is important to rake leaves when there are many leaves on the ground (so many that you can't see the turf underneath) so that heavy layers of leaves will not shade out, smother, and kill turf. However, when only a moderate number of leaves are on the ground, you can use your mower to mulch them back into the turf. Research results at Purdue and other universities demonstrates that:

- ◆ Tree leaves (both oak and maple) can be mulched without any detrimental effects on the soil or turf and usually results in improvements in soil structure.
- ◆ Mulching leaves into the turf will not increase thatch or disease.
- ◆ Leaves have no effect on soil pH and no measurable effect on nutrient availability.
- ◆ Mulching leaves will not result in increased weed pressure and some recent research in Michigan even suggests that mulching leaves back into your lawn can reduce dandelion populations.

Helpful tips:

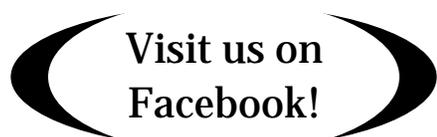
- ◆ The easiest way to dispose of leaves is to simply mow them into the turf.
- ◆ Regular mowing during the fall will chop the leaves into small pieces and allow them to filter into the turf.
- ◆ Dry leaves mulch more easily and readily than wet leaves.
- ◆ Mulching leaves with a mower is much easier and less time consuming than raking, blowing, and/or vacuuming the leaves like we have done in the past.
- ◆ Mulching leaves disposes of the leaves without filling up our landfills and saves our municipalities thousands of dollars in disposal costs.
- ◆ Do not burn leaves because of our current burn bans and due to environmental pollution.

**Monroe County
Master Gardeners
Association**

Cooperative Extension Service
3400 South Walnut Street
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Helping others grow!



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Master Gardener Calendar

September 7-13, times vary, Bloomington Life-long Learning Coalition presents a series of garden-related programs; for information and registration, see Bloomington.in.gov/bllic and localgrowers.org.

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September 23, 6:30 p.m., general meeting at the extension office meeting room, two speakers, two hours of education credit

October 4, 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m., Hendricks County Master Gardeners are presenting *2014 Adventures in Gardening* at the Hendricks County 4-H Conference Complex in Danville.