

Roots and Shoots

Volume 30, Issue 11

November 2014

Monroe County Master Gardeners Association

Annual harvest dinner is November 11

By Susan Lovell



Special points of interest:

- ◆ Dealing with stink bugs? See pages 10-11
- ◆ Sweet potatoes belong to the morning glory family
- ◆ Sydley Stolnik suggests two fun books for winter reading
- ◆ Mary Cusack has updated our volunteer opportunities listing
- ◆ Sign up to work on a Garden Fair committee and earn hours in winter

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Please join us for our annual harvest dinner and general meeting on Tuesday, November 11, 2014 at 6:30 pm. For the third year our dinner will be held at the Sherwood Oaks Christian Church in Fellowship Hall. The church is located at 2700 East Rogers Road, and we will enter Fellowship Hall through Door 20.

If you wish, bring your own place setting including plate, silverware, glass, and napkin for both you and any guest. Paper plates, plastic utensils, paper napkins, and paper cups will be available for those who forget their own or prefer disposables.

Since our dinner is a pitch-in, please remember to bring any serving utensils needed for your dish. Our dinner is always delicious with a great variety of main dishes, side-dishes, salads and desserts. The MCMGA board will provide hot and cold drinks.

We plan to start our dinner at 6:30 p.m., so plan to arrive early to find a seat at a table and a place for your dish. Our speaker will be Linda Chapman, owner of Harvest Moon Flower Farm. Her topic is *Flower Arranging*. There will be a brief business meeting and a surprise or two. Our volunteers for the evening are Penny Austin, Susan Sachtjen, Mary Cusack, Marilyn Brinley, Nancy Page, and Muff Johnson. If you can help clean up and straighten up at the end of the evening, help is always appreciated. See you there!

Member news

By Evelyn Harrell



Join us at Sherwood Oaks Christian Church for the annual harvest dinner, a pitch-in of gastronomic delight. Please include serving utensils with your dish when you bring your favorite entre or dessert or side dish. They are always excellent. Drinks are provided.

The November general meeting is an ambitious event. We wrap up the 2014 year on November 11 with short presentations from a couple of the organizations that were awarded grants from the proceeds of the 2014 Garden Fair. Linda Chapman from Harvest Moon Flower Farm will be our speaker. She'll be sharing her knowledge of flower arranging with us. You can think of it as a seasonal swan song, or a farewell to the excellent growing season we've enjoyed. If you have put away the water baths and the jar lids and the freezer bags and all the paraphernalia of the year's harvest of fruits and vegetables, or have put away the deer deterrents and the stakes, pruners, nets, loppers, and seed packets, be ready to relax and enjoy yourself.

Between trips to the buffet tables, be sure to visit the display of photo entries and vote for your choice for the cover of the 2015 issue of *folia and flora*. Next, please check out the sign-up sheets for the 2015 Garden Fair. All committees need your help to make this our most successful event yet.

Be there to participate in the election of officers. They lead your organization—be sure you know who they are. A tip of the hat to the nomination committee, Diana Young, Susan Lovell, and Mary Cusack, for their efficient and timely work.

Bring your 2015 membership form, if you have not yet renewed your MCMGA membership. You may download a copy from the MCMGA website if you need a form, fill it out with your information and your interests, and put it in your purse or your shirt pocket or on the car seat, or stick it in the bag with your dish, so you can be certain of being included in the 2015 *folia and flora*.

November 11 is Veteran's Day. We will recognize our veterans at the meeting and will enjoy a return visit by the Sounds of Indiana with a selection of patriotic songs. You'll surely want to sing along.

FYI

By Nancy White



A special thank you to Lynn Courson who was able to solicit daffodil bulbs and daylily starts for planting at WonderGarden this fall. Lynn has been a member of our WonderGarden work crew this season and is active in the Indiana Daffodil Society. Lynn worked with Bloomington resident, Sara Kinne, to choose the varieties that were donated to the WonderGarden. In October, Master Gardeners and a volunteer crew of families from Boston Scientific planted the daffodils and the daylilies. Lynn was able to provide us the donated daylily starts through her contacts with a daylily breeder in Ohio. We are grateful to all who made this addition to WonderGarden possible. Be sure to visit the garden next spring to see the bulb show.

Oops

We are sorry that Jan Greenwood's name was omitted in the last issue of *Roots and Shoots*. Jan has been a member of the WonderGarden 2014 work crew, and we apologize for not listing her name.

Garden Fair news

Leadership for the 2015 Garden Fair is getting organized and will be meeting regularly to plan the March 28 event. Since this is an earlier date than in past years, Karen King, vendor chair, has already contacted our list of commercial vendors and non-profit organizations to alert them to "save the date." If you know of any vendors or non-profits that might be new or not on our list, please contact Karen. New possibilities are always welcome.

If you want to gain some volunteer hours this winter while outside work is difficult, consider joining a Garden Fair committee. You can contact Nancy White or sign the sheet at our November 11 annual harvest dinner. We always need help on the day of the Garden Fair, but the early planning these months before the Fair are important, too, and can gain you volunteer hours. It takes nine active committees to make the Garden Fair a reality. Most of these committees start their work early such as the vendor committee which is now organizing the vendors and non-profits, and the publicity committee which will soon begin designing, writing, and planning all the ways we "get the word out" about this year's Fair. The education committee will contact possible speakers for our free seminars, and the physical arrangements committee will arrange booth spaces and design the armory plan for our event. Lots of hands are needed for these committees now. Please volunteer.

In the grow

By Rosie Lerner, Purdue Extension Consumer Horticulturist



Q. I live on 6.5 acres of land that is completely surrounded by a few varieties of tall pine trees, over a hundred of them. When we moved here four years ago, the trees were very full and looked very healthy; however, this past year or two I have noticed many of them seem to be losing their limbs, starting at the bottom, and it seems to be spreading. We trimmed the trees that line the driveway from the base to about 10 feet to get rid of the dead branches. Who could I call that is knowledgeable to come and take a look at my property to look at these trees and maybe give us a recommendation to cure this, if it can be. These trees are beautiful and give us all our privacy. J.H., Valparaiso, Indiana

A. Pines and other conifers can lose lower limbs gradually as the trees age, possibly just from being shaded from the upper canopy as the trees mature. If the trees are planted too closely, they may also be shading each other. Windbreaks and perimeter plantings are commonly started with close spacing when the trees are young to provide quicker screening, but as the trees mature, they get too crowded. If the rest of the tree looks healthy, I would not be too concerned. But there are a number of disease and insect pests, as well as environmental and weather-related stress that can cause decline. We've had a few tough years—most notably the extreme heat and drought in 2012 and the brutally cold winter in early 2014.

There are several resources available to help determine the health of your trees. The Purdue Extension office in your county may be able to assist with diagnosis. Contact information is available at extension.purdue.edu/pages/CountyOffices.aspx.

The Purdue Plant and Pest Diagnostic Lab can assist with diagnosis of your trees and other plants either by digital images, live samples or both. See the website for additional information. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources has district foresters distributed across the state who can provide technical assistance to woodland owners. Their contact information is listed at www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/4750.htm.

Q. I have a 30-year-old sugar maple tree that did not get leaves this year. It appears healthy—no sign of bugs or any other damage. The tips of the small branches appear to have little buds ready to turn into leaves—but nothing. Was the tree too damaged by the severe cold this winter and it died? Or will it live and have leaves next year? M.S., Valparaiso, Indiana

A. Unfortunately, the prognosis is not good for trees that failed to leaf out this year. Many trees across the state experienced significant dieback or death of the entire tree following this year's harsh winter. To be certain that the tree is dead before you have it cut down, you can check the buds by cutting a few open. If they are green inside, then there is hope. If the buds are brown and dry, then it is time to remove the tree. (continued on page 5)

In the grow (continued from page 4)

A healthy tree would also have buds all along the twigs, not just at the branch tips.

Q. My neighbors and I have a question about tomato plants. Our tomato plants have the same problem year after year, even though we rotate to a new section of earth yearly.

The problem is when tomatoes are set out for what we hope will be a good crop, the tomato plants start, grow, and start flowering and producing fruit. But at about this time, the bottom leaves and stems that do flower start to die, but the main stems of the plant are not affected, or so it seems. Eventually, this dying of leaves and stems continues up the plant slowly as the plant grows and produces fruit. The main stem generally stays green, but in later summer the whole plant will eventually die, or nearly all of it will.



Tomatoes dying from the bottom of the stem up. Photo Credit: Rosie Lerner, Purdue

I've heard copper sulfate or something on that order will help. Does it? Or do you know what the problem is or may be? J.D.C., DeMotte, Indiana

A. Tomatoes are plagued by a number of diseases that can cause the symptoms you've described. Early blight and septoria leaf spot are common fungal diseases that are particularly problematic during wet weather. Good cultural practices can help prevent or reduce infection, and there are a few fungicides (some contain copper) that can help protect uninfected foliage. But in frequent wet conditions, it is difficult to completely control. Be sure to clean up the plant debris this fall to reduce problems next year. Additional information on these tomato diseases can be found at <http://www.ppdL.purdue.edu/PPDL/weeklypics/7-12-10.html> and www.ipm.iastate.edu/ipm/hortnews/1996/4-26-1996/tomato.html

Q. We would like to plant a couple of deciduous trees for shade on the south side of our house. The problem is that we have a sewer line from the house to the collection box about 75 feet down the slope. What kind of trees would best serve our purpose? M.M., Hardinsburg, Indiana

A. Trees are not well suited to planting near septic or sewer lines. Roots will eventually grow well beyond the canopy dripline and can invade openings in the pipes to reach the moisture and nutrients. If space permits, you could plant trees farther away from the sewer line to provide some shade and consider smaller shrubs and/or perennials closer to the house. Purdue Extension has a publication on *Landscaping Near Septic Systems with Native Plants*.

Get yard, garden ready for winter

By John Jett, Horticulture Specialist, WVU Extension Service

With the onset of winter just around the corner, now is the time to prepare your lawns, gardens, and landscapes for the months ahead.

- Remove leaves and mow lawns one last time after growth has stopped to reduce hiding areas for moles and mice, and reduce incidence of snow mold on turf in the early spring.
- Fertilize lawns in late November to early December with a slow-release form of nitrogen at a rate of 1 pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet to promote root development and early spring green-up.
- Remove garden debris and weeds to reduce incidence of disease and insects in the spring.
- If dry conditions exist, water lawns, trees, and shrubs until the ground begins to freeze to prevent winter desiccation.
- Add mulches to prevent heaving of strawberries and perennials during periods of freezing and thawing. Mulches around trees and shrubs will reduce the need for weeding in the spring, help conserve moisture, and moderate soil temperatures.
- Aerate the lawn and overseed to reduce soil compaction and thatch buildup and to improve turf density.
- Wrap plants in exposed areas or those on south or west foundations with burlap to reduce desiccation, protect tender flower buds, and support plants susceptible to snow load breakdown.
- Protect trees and shrubs from mice and rabbits by enclosing the base of these plants with hardware cloth.
- For a tree exhibiting poor growth with root feeders past the tree's dripline, fertilize at the rate of 2 to 3 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of area under the tree.
- Store garden chemicals properly for the winter. Check product labels to see if freezing will harm the products.
- Drain hoses and sprayers and check owner's manuals for instructions on how to winterize mowers and other power equipment.
- Clean and lightly oil metal parts of hand tools and inventory those that need to be repaired or replaced.
- Secure and fill birdfeeders.

Sweet potato or yam?

By Rosie Lerner, Extension Consumer Horticulturist, Purdue

Will you be eating sweet potatoes or yams at your Thanksgiving dinner? While many folks use the terms interchangeably, they are distinct.

Botanically speaking, the sweet potato is known as *Ipomoea batatas* and belongs to the morning glory family (Convolvulaceae). True yams belong to one of several species of *Dioscorea* in the yam family (Dioscoreace), and their production is limited to tropical climates. So most likely you will be eating sweet potatoes rather than true yams.

There are two types of sweet potatoes, often described as either dry-fleshed or moist-fleshed. This refers to the mouth feel, rather than the actual moisture present in the root. Actually, soft versus firm-fleshed types would be a more accurate description. Moist-fleshed types (often incorrectly called yams) tend to convert more of their starch to sugar and dextrin during cooking, becoming softer and sweeter than the more mealy, dry-fleshed types.



sweet potatoes

The nutritive value of the sweet potato is high and is a great way to increase vegetables in your diet. Sweet potatoes are a fat-free source of fiber, complex carbohydrates, Vitamins A and C, and iron, and are low in calories.

Sweet potatoes can be grown in the home garden. However, since they are tropical in origin, they produce best with both warm days and warm nights. A long growing season of 4-5 months is needed for optimum yield but acceptable home garden quantities can be harvested in a shorter growing season. The common sweet potato is a vigorous trailing vine, but some cultivars are bush or bunch types that are more practical for small gardens.

Ornamental cultivars of sweet potato are quite popular as container plants and annual ground covers. While the ornamental cultivars typically produce enlarged roots, they are bred for beautiful foliage rather than food quality. Their roots are likely to be starchy or possibly bitter. You must also consider whether pesticides, which are not labeled for use on the edible crop, have been used on the ornamental plants. So it's best to admire them with your eyes rather than your taste buds.

For more information on growing sweet potatoes for harvest, see Purdue Extension Bulletin HO-136

<http://www.hort.purdue.edu/ext/ho-136.pdf>

Roots and Shoots

2015 Purdue Master Gardener Study Abroad program

By Rosie Lerner and Mike Dana, Purdue

We are official! Our program for the 2015 NEW Purdue Master Gardener Study Abroad—Northern England and Wales (NEW) has been approved and the program brochure complete with fee info is now available for download at www.hort.purdue.edu/NEW/NEW15Flier.pdf.

Here are a few details about this program:

July 6—18, 2015*

(*arrival in England July 7)

Fee for land package:

Double Occupancy: \$3,350 per person

Single Occ. \$3,900 per person

We will open for enrollment on November 11 at 1:30 PM EST at which time you will be able to enroll either online or by phone. We will not accept any enrollments prior to that date/time. You can view more about the program and preview the enrollment form at www.hort.purdue.edu/NEW/.

We will visit such notable sites as Chatsworth, Levens Hall, Scampston Walled Gardens, Studley Royal & Fountains Abbey, Castle Howard, York Gate Gardens, Biddulph Grange, David Austin Roses, Bodnant Garden, Powis Castle, Kenilworth Castle with its reconstructed Elizabethan Garden, and the Ryton Organic Gardens.

Two book choices

By Sydley Skolnik



'Tis the season for hunkering down with a good book. Here are a couple of suggestions for keeping in touch with your inner gardener during the winter months.

The Bees by Laline Paull

This is a tell-all of the inside workings of a bee hive. Our heroine is Flora 717, a sanitation worker whose curiosity, courage and strength gets her into dangerous territory and on the Queen's hit list. It's a thrilling, imaginative suspense novel that will change forever the way you look at the world outside your window.

The Language of Flowers by Vanessa Diffenbaugh

The Victorian language of flowers has long been used to convey romantic expressions. The young woman in this story finds language useful in communicating her grief, mistrust, and solitude. It's a moving story of her growth, blooming, and flowering; connecting to the world through flowers and their meaning.

Volunteer opportunities

compiled by Mary Cusack

Location	Time	Jobs	Contact
Bloomington Community Orchards , 2120 S. Highland Avenue	seasonal	maintenance all levels of expertise welcome	Stacey Decker getinvolved@bloomingtoncommunityorchard.org bloomingtoncommunityorchard.org
Cheryl's Garden at Karst Farm Park , 2450 S. Endwright Road	summer during growing season	help with design and maintenance	Linda Emerson 812-345-2913 (cell)
Flatwoods Park Butterfly Garden , 9499 W. Flatwoods Rd., Gosport, IN	seasonal	maintenance and rejuvenation	Cathy Meyer 812-349-2805
Hilltop Gardens 2367 E. 10th St.	year around	maintaining gardens	Charlotte Griffin 812-345-8128
Hinkle-Garton Farmstead 2920 E. 10th St.	year around	invasive species removal, soil reclama- tion and more	Danielle Bachant-Bell 812-360-6544 (text) hgfvolunteers@gmail.com facebook.com/HinkleGartonFarmstead
Hoosier Hills Food Bank Garden , 7480 N. Howard Road	year around	plant, harvest, and compost	Ryan Jochim, 812-334-8374 hhfoodbank.org/volunteer.php
Middle Way House Roof Top Garden , a domestic violence shelter	seasonal	scheduled work- days at the garden	Toby Strout, director 812-333-7404 garden@middlewayhouse.org
Mother Hubbard's Cupboard 1100 W. Allen St.	year around	various garden tasks	Kendra Brewer, coordinator garden@mhcfoodpantry.org
T. C. Steele , 4220 T. C. Steele Rd., Nashville	seasonal	maintenance, in- vasive species removal, restorations	Anthony Joslin, leave a message at 812-988-278 tcsteele.org
WonderGarden , 308 W. Fourth St.	twice a year	maintenance, planting, mulching	Nancy White, 812-824-4426 nwhite38@hotmail.com wonderlab.org/exhibits/wondergarden
Wylie House , 307 E. Second St.	year around	growing/saving seeds and maintenance	Sherry Wise, 812-855-6224 indiana.edu/~libwylie/garden.html
MCMGA Demonstration Garden , Fairgrounds	year around	select gardens and plan the event	Herman Young, 812-322-5700 Jeanie Cox, 812-360-3587
MCMGA Garden Walk Committee	year around	select gardens and plan the event	Mary Jane Hall, 812-345-3985 gardenz4ever@hotmail.com
MCMGA Horticulture Hotline	year around	answer inquiries and research	Amy Thompson, 812-349-2572 afthompson@purdue.edu
MCMGA Program Committee	year around	Help plan MG programs	Sandy Belth, 812-825-8353, belthbirds@aol.com Susan Lovell, 812-339-5914, smlovell@indiana.edu
MCMGA Speakers Bureau	year around	research and plan speakers	Amy Thompson, 812-349-2572 afthompson@purdue.edu
MCMGA Website	year around	various jobs asso- ciated with the website	Stephen Anderson, 812-360-1216 mcmga.net

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

Tips for dealing with stink bugs

By Mary Kay Malinoski, Extension Specialist, University of Maryland

The brown marmorated stink bug (*Halyomorpha halys*) is native to parts of Asia and was first observed in the U.S. in Allentown, PA in 2001. Adults congregate in late summer/early fall and actively seek safe overwintering sites—especially inside buildings. Then they emerge and mate in spring. They are not harmful to people, houses, or pets. They do not bite, sting, suck blood, or spread disease and they don't eat or bore into wood. The BMSB feeds on plant leaves, buds, and fruits.



Typically, stink bugs will emerge from cracks under or behind baseboards, around window and door trim, and around exhaust fans or lights in ceilings. Mechanical exclusion is the best method to keep stink bugs from entering homes and buildings. First, attempt to locate the openings where the insects gain access. Cracks around windows, doors, siding, utility pipes, behind chimneys, and underneath the wood fascia and other openings should be sealed with good quality silicone or silicone-latex caulk. Damaged screens on doors and windows should be repaired or replaced.

Keep these points in mind when choosing a method for controlling BMSB:

- The BMSB is a strong flier and will quickly “drop” downward when disturbed.
- They emit a strong, unpleasant odor when threatened or crushed. The smell goes away quickly.
- They are more sluggish on cool, overcast days.
- They tend to congregate late summer/fall on warm, elevated surfaces.
- Pesticides are generally ineffective and not recommended for controlling this pest inside or outside your home.

(continued on page 11)

Tips for dealing with stink bugs (continued from page 10)

Sucking them up with a dry or wet vac is efficient. The bugs will cause the collection canister or bag and other parts of your machine to smell, but the odor is temporary. Some people have solved this issue by slipping a knee high stocking over the outside of their vacuum tube and securing it with a rubberband. The stocking is then stuffed into the tube and captures the sucked up bugs before they get into the canister or bag. Turn off the vacuum to empty the bugs into a container of soapy water.

Sweep the bugs into a container of soapy water. Cut the top off a straight-sided plastic container—half to one gallon size. Fill the bottom quarter of the container with water mixed with a teaspoon of liquid detergent or soap. Place your hand, a piece of cardboard, or whisk broom over top of the bugs wherever they are in your home and sweep them down into the container. Or slide the container up a wall, window, or drapes where bugs are resting to get them to drop down into the soapy water. They cannot escape and will eventually drown. You can attach your container to a pole or broom handle to reach high locations.

There are insecticides, available to individuals labeled for controlling indoor pests. The question to ask: Is spraying a harmless, nuisance pest worth the expense and trouble, and exposure of people and pets to toxic chemicals?

Aerosol-type insecticide foggers are not recommended for use indoors to kill stinkbugs that have amassed on ceilings and walls in living areas. They will not kill all of the stink bugs or prevent more from entering your home. Spraying insecticides into cracks and crevices will not prevent the bugs from entering living areas and is not a viable or recommended treatment.

It is not advisable to use an insecticide inside after the insects have gained access to the wall voids or attic areas. Although insecticidal dust treatments to these voids may kill hundreds of bugs, there is the possibility that carpet beetles will feed on the dead stink bugs and subsequently attack woolens, stored dry goods or other natural products in the home.

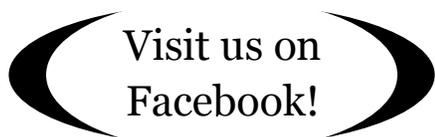
You can sweep the bugs into containers as mentioned above. This can be effective when the bugs are easy to access and have congregated in large numbers. Spraying the bugs with a stream of water will dislodge them but they will probably return.

**Monroe County
Master Gardeners
Association**

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Helping others grow!



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Mulch

- Protects the soil from erosion
- Reduces compaction from the impact of heavy rains
- Conserves moisture, reducing the need for frequent waterings
- Maintains a more even soil temperature
- Prevents weed growth
- Keeps fruits and vegetables clean
- Keeps feet clean, allowing access to garden even when damp
- Provides a "finished" look to the garden

http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail//?cid=nrcs143_023585