

# ROOTS AND SHOOTS



October 2008, Volume 24, Issue 10

## Workshop Offers Tips for Wise Use of Water in Gardens

By  
Helen  
Hollingsworth

Monroe County Master Gardeners are sponsoring *Water: Making Every Drop Count*, on Saturday, October 18, 2008, 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., at First United Church, 2420 East Third Street. Master Gardeners earn five education hours credit.

Program is as follows:

Keynote speaker, Bill Jones, limnologist and professor, School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University, *Whiskey's for Drinkin'—Water's for Fightin'*

Michael Simmons, program specialist for Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department, *Tapped Out: Planning for Sustainable Water Use in the Garden*

Cathy Meyer, naturalist, Monroe County Parks and Recreation, *Rain Gardens*

Linda Thompson, city of Bloomington senior environmental planner, *Water Quality and Quantity for a Sustainable Future*

Moya Andrews, author of *Perennials Short and Tall: A Seasonal Progression of Flowers for Your Garden*, will autograph books.

Door prizes will be distributed. The workshop is open to the public and to all Master Gardeners. Cost of the workshop is \$40, which includes a continental breakfast and a box lunch. Registration deadline is October 8, 2008. Send contact information and check payable to MCMGA to Cheryl Engber, 4672 E. Compton Boulevard, Bloomington, IN 47401.

Workshop registration flyers are available in the mailed September issue of *Roots and Shoots* and at [www.mcmga.net](http://www.mcmga.net). For information, contact Cheryl Engber at [cmengber@att.net](mailto:cmengber@att.net) or the extension office at 349-2575.

## Master Gardeners Celebrate Twentieth Year in December

By  
Nancy  
White

The twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Monroe County Master Gardeners Association will be celebrated on Monday, December 1, at 6:00 p.m., with a gala buffet dinner and program at Terry's at Westbury. Invitations will be mailed in late October to all members. Guests are welcome. We urge those attending to make reservations early and to send payment with your response card which will be included in the invitation. Cost of the buffet dinner is \$12 per person.

In conjunction with this celebration, Bob Baird and Helen Hollingsworth are requesting that members send them information on the history and early activities of our group. Bob will be sharing some of your remembrances at our 20th Anniversary Dinner. Share a memory of your intern class or some humorous thing happened while you volunteered at the Demo Garden or the State Fair. If you attended state conventions, you might want to share some memories of those. You can send these items by surface or e-mail or by phone.

## Member News



Over 40 members and their guests attended the September General Meeting on September 23 at the Monroe County Public Library. President Marilyn Brinley announced that the nominating committee is still looking for volunteers to fill the slate of officers for 2009. If you could give a little time to our organization, call Carol Cobine, nominating committee member, right away. Board Members attend a monthly meeting and help to plan and implement association activities. We welcome any member who might be interested in serving. Extension educator Amy Thompson reminded all MGs to send volunteer hours to her by surface mail or e-mail right away so that she can record those with Purdue.

By  
Nancy  
White

Two hours of education credit were offered at this meeting with Mark Evans, Purdue Extension Educator, speaking on soil and Nancy White sharing tips for adding spring bulbs to our gardens. Mark stressed getting soil samples done and using organic matter to amend our local soils. He discussed various ways to add nitrogen and phosphorus with the emphasis on obtaining information from soil sampling before using amendments. Nancy discussed planning spaces for bulbs of all types, planting techniques, choosing good quality bulbs, and finding sources for the best product. Materials provided to those attending included descriptions of numerous bulbs available, a list of sources, and information on the care of bulbs in the garden. Many thanks to Mary Jane Hall and Jackie Gilkey who provided delicious refreshments for our September meeting.

### Send Your Hours to Extension Office

When you are sending in your volunteer hours, don't forget to check the September issue of *Roots and Shoots* where hours were listed for this year's general meetings and field trips.

### Hilltop Holds Annual Fall Sale

Hilltop Garden and Nature Center's Annual Daylily and Daffodil Sale is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 4. Libby Frey's famous daffodils will be featured—the very daffodils that were displayed at Hilltop's Daffodil Show last spring. Check out the web site, [www.indiana.edu/~hilltop](http://www.indiana.edu/~hilltop), for pictures of these beauties to help you make your selections in advance. Hilltop is located at 2367 E. 10<sup>th</sup> St., just north of Tulip Tree Apartments. For more information: 855-2799 or [hilltop@indiana.edu](mailto:hilltop@indiana.edu).

### Monroe MGs Well Represented at State Conference

Many members of our local group attended the Master Gardener State Convention on September 26-28 in Indianapolis. Keynote speakers were Brent Furbee on Poisonous Plants, Tim Wood on The Hunt for Plants that Please, John Friel on Enjoying Plant Nomenclature, and Bob Hill on Four Seasons of Fun. Several other breakout sessions were available on a variety of topics. Tours of local public and private gardens were offered, and vendor booths sold garden related items. Monroe County MGs who attended were Barb Cappy, Dale Calabrese, Jeanne Cox, Dan Nichols, Mary Hawkins, Helen Hollingsworth, Ann McEndarfer, Jo Prentice, Vicky St. Myers, and Nancy White.

### Calendar

**Saturday, October 18**, 8:30 a.m. — 3:00 p.m., advanced educational workshop, *Water: Make Every Drop Count*, at First United Church, East Third Street

**Saturday, November 22**, 8:00 a.m., INPAWS Conference, Indianapolis

**Monday, December 1**, 20th anniversary of MCMGA, Terry's Banquet & Catering, Canterbury, 6:00 p.m.

## Marilyn Brinley Wins in State MG Photo Contest

By  
Helen  
Hollingsworth

Winners of the statewide Purdue Master Gardener photo contest, judged by photographer Darryl Jones, were announced at the 2008 State MG Conference held in Indianapolis on September 25-26. Winning photo entries in the contest are featured in the 2009 Purdue Master Gardener Calendar, a project that raises funds for Master Gardener programming in Indiana. Prizes were framed print for first, note cards for second and calendar for third, with calendars being awarded for people's choice as well. There were 145 total entries, divided into seven categories. The people's choice category winners were determined by vote on the Friday of the conference.

First place winners are as follows:

Abstracts	Marilyn Brinley
Blooms	Bonnie Holtz
Creatures	Sue Zellers
Exotics & Tropicals	Karen Kennedy
Landscapes & Garden Scenes	Carol Moulton
Trees & Shrubs	Barb Jablonski
Veggies	Nan Hodge

In addition, Marilyn Brinley won second and third places in Blooms category, as well as people's choice award in Blooms category.

The 2009 Indiana Master Gardener Calendars are available now, with more beautiful photos, seasonal Haiku, and monthly garden tips. Changes and other features this year include more room to write appointments on each date, photos and poems from MGs all around the state, photo winners chosen by professional photographer, monthly gardening tips by Rosie Lerner, major holidays noted, and a summary of the 30 year history of the Master Gardener Program in Indiana.

Price of the calendars is \$10, and Marion County MGA pays shipping. For each calendar purchased, a \$1.25 rebate will be sent to the county Extension MG Program or MG Association you choose; \$1.25 will go to the state MG Program Office in W. Lafayette; and \$1.25 will go to help underwrite expenses for the MG state conference in 2009. Pictures of the 2009 calendar will be on the Purdue website soon.

Order calendars from Kathleen Hull, MG Calendar Project, 7899 Briarhopper Road, Monrovia, IN 46157. Make check payable to Marion County Master Gardener Association, and include your address and the Master Gardener program you wish to receive the rebate. For more information, contact Kathleen Hull at [hullk@ccrtc.com](mailto:hullk@ccrtc.com) or 317-996-4380.

## New White Grub Pests of Indiana

By  
Timothy Gibb  
and Douglas  
Richmond

Although Indiana turfgrass managers have grown accustomed to managing Japanese beetle and masked chafer grubs, three new species of white grubs seem poised to cause additional management concerns across the state. Recent statewide survey efforts have detected adults of the European chafer, Asiatic garden beetle, and Oriental beetle in one or more Indiana counties, and damaging grub populations of at least one species have been confirmed.

## From the President's Desk



Fall has arrived, and the leaves are turning color. Though the growing season is winding down, there is still much to do, both in our gardens and in our organization. At home, leaves need to be raked, garden debris needs to be cleaned up, lawns must be fertilized and bulbs must be planted. Similarly, the Monroe County Master Gardeners must begin preparations now for the next year.

By  
Marilyn  
Brinley

Three of the board positions are open for next year, as the president, vice-president for education and the secretary will be stepping aside. The nominating committee is searching for interested individuals to fill these spots. I would encourage you to consider being on the board as it is an interesting and a fulfilling experience. The board members meet to discuss old and new projects, attend to the business of the organization and search for ways to better serve our members and the community. In addition, the board must ensure that we are following Purdue University's guidelines for Master Gardeners. There is no better way to understand how the organization works than to be on the board. While many opportunities abound for those interested in serving this organization, being on the board allows one to have a direct say in the operations of the group.

I ask only that while you are out in your gardens preparing the space for next year's growing season that you consider how you might help the Monroe County Master Gardeners continue to grow. I think you will be surprised to find how much fun it can be. Have a happy fall.

## Vegetables

By  
Ward  
Upham,  
Extension  
Associate

**Sweet Potatoes** Sweet potatoes should be harvested no later than the first fall freeze because cold temperatures damage the sensitive roots. However, you may want to harvest earlier if you prefer a small sweet potato. Test dig a hill to see if they are the size you want.

Sweet potatoes should be cured after being dug. The digging process often damages the tender skin, and curing helps these small wounds heal over. Place the roots in a warm, humid location for five to ten days immediately after digging. A location with a temperature around 85-90 degrees is ideal. A space heater can be used to heat a small room or other area. Raise the humidity by placing moist towels in the room. The curing process not only heals but also helps convert starches to sugars. This process improves the texture and flavor of the roots.

**Garlic Planting Time** October is a good time to plant garlic (*Allium sativum*) if you want large quality cloves next summer. Apply three pounds of 10-10-10 fertilizer per 100 square feet and mix into the soil before planting. Plant individual cloves point up and spaced three inches apart and one to two inches deep. The larger the clove, the larger the bulb at harvest. Water in well and mulch with straw to conserve soil warmth and encourage good establishment. Harvest will not occur until next summer when most of the foliage has browned.

Elephant garlic (*Allium ampeloprasum*) should also be planted now. It is a plant with a milder garlic flavor and is actually a closer relative to the leek than to true garlic.

## Hendricks County Presents Garden Seminar

Hendricks County Master Gardeners present *Adventures in Gardening*, a seminar for every gardener, on Saturday, October 11, 2008, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Hendricks County 4H Fairgrounds Auditorium in Danville, Indiana.

Featured speaker, **C. Colston (Cole) Burrell**, internationally known gardener, lecturer and author of numerous books, will present "Landscaping: Including Native Plants and Other Hardy Plants in Your Design."

**Hilary Cox**, horticulturist, garden designer, will present "Organic Gardening plus Native Plants: Ornamental and Functional".

Purdue University's **Fred Whitford**, coordinator of Purdue Pesticide Programs teaches "The Proper Use of Pesticides and Their Effect on the Environment." An energetic speaker, Whitford uses an interactive presentation to make his point.

Garden Club of Indiana's own past president, **Ruth Moorhead and husband Phil Moorhead**, will present "Gourds: How to Grow Them and What to Do with Them." Ruth Moorhead is active in many plant societies; presently she is the Landscape Design School Chairman. She serves on the Garden Club's National and Central Region Boards.

Cost: \$39, including delicious continental breakfast and lunch

To register, send contact information and check payable to Hendricks County Master Gardeners Association to Hendricks County Extension Office, MG Assoc., P.O. Box 7, 1900 E. Main St., Danville, IN 46122

For more information and map see [www.hendricksgardeners.com](http://www.hendricksgardeners.com), or call 317-745-9260.

## Selecting Types of Bulbs for Fall Planting

By Nancy White  
Many varieties of bulbs are available at this time for year for fall planting. Some criteria for selecting bulbs include bloom time, color, height, and resistance to critters. Below is a list of bulbs and their attributes. Think of planting bulbs for first bloom, for emphasis in early spring, for color at any time, and as focus points any place throughout the garden.

Aconite—one of earliest bloomers, short, good for rock gardens, naturalize well

Allium—(flowering onion) various sizes and colors; attract birds and butterflies

Anemone—not suited for full shade; various colors, blooms late spring

Colchicum—in spring, only leaves appear; later in summer blooms burst forth

Crocus—early to bloom, variety of colors, will naturalize well

Daffodil—numerous sizes, varieties, and colors, deer resistant

Iris—usually best to get starts from other gardeners; avoid planting too deep

Fritillaria—various colors and sizes; some are critter resistant

Gladiolus—best to get winter hardy variety; available in variety of colors

Glory of the Snow—very early bloomer; several colors; has small star-shaped flower

Grape Hyacinth (Muscari)—will spread quickly, shades of purple, lilac, and white

Hyacinth—various colors and sizes, strong fragrance, hardy

Asiatic and Oriental Lily—various colors and multiple blooms; blooms early/mid-summer

Snow Drop—will bloom very early; nice for small spaces and rock gardens

Star Flower—good for naturalizing, white and shades of blue and purple

Tulip—various sizes, colors, and varieties; not critter resistant

Windflowers (Anemone Blanda)—early bloomers, white, pink, blue; fern-like foliage

## Time to Dig and Store Tender Bulbs

By Nancy White  
The National Gardening Association website has a lengthy September article on saving summer bulbs that are non-hardy such as gladiolas, dahlias, caladium, and elephant ears. The article suggests lifting these bulbs carefully in fall and checking for disease or insect damage. Discard the questionable ones and set the others aside in a dry, warm location to cure for a few days. After curing, trim the foliage down to an inch from the bulb. A fungicide may be used at this time if desired. Do not store in plastic bags or containers but spread them out in a box or paper bag and layer them with peat moss. Store in a location with temperatures of 50-60 degrees. Check the bulbs regularly and discard any that have rotted. To see the rest of this informative article check out [www.garden.org/celebratingtheseasons](http://www.garden.org/celebratingtheseasons)

## Twig Girdlers

Submitted by Amy Thompson  
Twig girdlers are currently doing what they do — girdling twigs 6 to 13 mm in diameter. Although girdled branches remain attached to trees via a central core, the weight of some branches may break the core causing the green-leaved branch to fall. In most instances, though, the branches remain in tact.

Eventually, however, girdled branches die, and with the winds of autumn, the dead brittle branches fall and litter the ground beneath the tree.

What about the twig girdler beetles, and why can't we observe them making the actual cuts? While twig girdlers are of substantial size (up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  -inch in length), they generally keep out of sight, high up in tree canopies. Even if they are on the lower branches, they escape detection because of their ability to blend into the background.

After female beetles deposit eggs into gnawed notches near bud scars and side shoots on terminal portions of branches, they circle the branch below where eggs have been deposited. Thus, eggs and larvae are ensured of having dry wood in which to develop, whether in dropped branches or those remaining in tree canopies. Twig girdlers overwinter as small borer larvae, and complete their development in spring and summer.

Adults emerge again in late summer to repeat girdling activities.

Twig girdlers are a nuisance for homeowners because they produce unsightly lawn litter that may interfere with lawn mowing. There is little to be done other than to gather up and dispose of downed branches. Trees themselves suffer little from this natural pruning process. (BB)

from <http://www.hfr.ksu.edu/DesktopModules/ViewDocument.aspx?DocumentID=2194>

## MCMGA Badge Update

By Amy Thompson  
Congratulations to Bethany Murray, Linda Burke and Jeff Schafer for achieving Advanced Master Gardener Status and Helen Hollingsworth for achieving Silver level certification. Unfortunately their badges arrived too late to be presented at the September meeting. Thanks to Beth, Linda, Jeff and Helen for all their volunteer efforts!

## Grow a Mighty Oak from a Little Acorn!

Submitted by  
Amy  
Thompson

This fall's bumper crop of acorns has many folks wondering how to handle the seeds to produce an oak seedling. The biggest difference is that unlike most seeds, acorns **MUST NOT** be allowed to dry out! If you collected some acorns a couple of weeks ago, and left them in a paper bag or just sitting on a shelf, the embryo in the seed has already died from desiccation, and the acorn will not germinate. If this describes your current acorn handling, go out now and collect some acorns that have been lying in the grass or under fallen leaves. Float-test the seeds in a bucket of water, and keep only those that sink. The floaters have already gotten dried out, or a weevil has eaten much of the seed inside.

The easiest way to grow oak seedlings is to plant the acorn this fall either in a garden bed or in the location in the landscape where you want an oak tree. If it is from the white oak group (bur, post, white, chinkapin) the acorn will germinate immediately, producing a root this fall, but the top will not appear until next spring. Acorns from the red oak group (pin, red, black, blackjack, Shumard) will not sprout this fall, but do require a cool moist period, called stratification, before germination in the spring. Simply plant 3 to 4 acorns about 2 inches deep in each location where you want an oak tree, and later thin them out to a single seedling per spot. If sowing them in a garden bed, plant the acorns at least 4 inches apart for ease of digging and transplanting later.

If you have a green thumb you may want to try raising oak seedlings in a container. In this case store the acorn in a plastic bag in the refrigerator until ready for planting. Any type of pot can work, but a square container is best, as it prevents the oak's long roots from circling the pot walls, resulting in a girdling root. Cardboard quart or pint drink containers with several large diameter holes in the bottom work well. Typical houseplant or seed starting potting mixes are good.

Plant the acorns next February or March, so the seedlings are not germinating in the low light conditions of mid winter.

The best locations for growing your potted seedlings are outside, in partial shade, i.e., the east side of a building. This will mimic the field edge environment that young oaks grow best in. Trying to grow oak seedlings inside is more difficult, but can be accomplished on the sill of an unobstructed south window. During shoot growth flushes, the pots will need to be turned almost daily to prevent a crook from forming in the stem, as the seedling grows towards the light. It is best to keep the seedlings in the container just one growing season, and plant the seedling out in the landscape next fall or overwinter in a sheltered location and plant next spring. (CB)

from <http://www.hfrr.ksu.edu/DesktopModules/ViewDocument.aspx?DocumentID=2194>

## Eat Ornamental Sweet Potatoes?

Submitted by  
Amy  
Thompson

We often receive the question as to whether ornamental sweet potatoes are safe to eat. The answer is yes. Note that they are chosen for ornamental qualities rather than taste and so may not have the quality of our traditional types. (WU)

from <http://www.hfrr.ksu.edu/DesktopModules/ViewDocument.aspx?DocumentID=2194>



## November 22 Conference to Explore Role of Native Plants

*What:* Indiana Native Plant & Wildflower Society (INPAWS) 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference

*Theme:* “Growing Native Plants for Wildlife”

*When:* All day Saturday, November 22, 2008 (check-in starts at 8 a.m.)

*Where:* The Garrison, 6002 N. Post Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216

*Who:* Open to the public—anyone with an interest in native plants and wildlife habitat

*Cost:* Conference fees include all sessions, lunch, and refreshments. Fees listed are per attendee. Discounts apply when registering before November 1. (The first fee below is before Nov 1; the second figure is AFTER Nov 1)

INPAWS member \$50/\$60; Nonmember \$65/\$75; Student \$35/\$35

*Contact:* For event information visit [www.inpaws.org](http://www.inpaws.org). For media questions, contact Wendy Ford at [wwford@comcast.net](mailto:wwford@comcast.net) or 317-334-1932.

Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society (INPAWS) announces its fifteenth annual conference providing the know-how to help Hoosiers appreciate, grow, and conserve Indiana’s rich heritage of native plants. Set for November 22, 2008, at The Garrison on Indianapolis’s east side, the day-long conference will explore the pleasures and challenges of “Growing Native Plants for Wildlife.”

Native plants are the basis for establishing and maintaining wildlife habitat and naturally occurring ecosystems. Expert speakers will share the science and practice of creating native plant habitat to attract birds, frogs, butterflies, and other beneficial creatures to home landscapes.

Two internationally renowned speakers will be featured:

Doug Tallamy, professor and chairman of the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware in Newark, Delaware, will speak on the important ecological roles of plants in our landscapes.

Steve Yaninek, professor and chairman of the Department of Entomology at Purdue University, will focus on the annual migration of the monarch butterfly. Also on the agenda:

Wendell Zetterberg, president of the area chapter of Frogwatch USA, on elements of a healthy frog habitat.

State preservation botanist Mike Homoya on whether cultivars and hybrids should be considered “native” plants.

Dean Zimmerman, Indiana Department of Natural Resources wildlife biologist, on government grant programs to support the efforts of individuals in growing native plants for wildlife.

Reni Winter, owner/plant steward at Winterhaven Wildflowers & Native Plant Preserve, on the North American habitat needs of the monarch butterfly, the Certified Monarch Waystation program, and tips for growing monarch habitat plants.

Hilary Cox, garden writer/designer whose own garden is a Certified Wildlife Habitat, on designing home landscapes with fool-proof native plants.

Jim McCormac, botanist, avid birder, and author, on the role of habitat restoration in an increasingly urbanized landscape.

## Volunteer Opportunities Compiled by Nancy White

Location	Time	Jobs	Contact
Hilltop Garden and Nature Center	year around	various	Greg Speicher, 855-2799 or gspeiche@indiana.edu
Templeton Garden Project	spring/fall	teaching children	Nancy White, 824-4426
MG Demonstration Garden	seasonal	various	Bethany Murray, 339-8876, bethany.murray@gmail.com
T. C. Steele SHS	seasonal	various	Davie Kean, 988-2785
Cheryl's Garden	seasonal	various	Larime Wilson, 333-9705
Flatwoods Park Butterfly Gardens	seasonal	various	Cathy Meyer, 349,2800
MCMGA Horticulture Hotline	year around	inquiries and research	Amy Thompson, 349-2575
MCMGA Speakers Bureau	year around	various	Amy Thompson, 349-2575
MCMGA Newsletter	year around	writing, stapling, labeling	Helen Hollingsworth, 332-7313
MCMGA Web Site	year around	various	Barbara Hays, 332-4032
MG Program Committee Member	year around	plan MG programs	Nancy White, 824-4426 Bob Baird, 331-1308
Middle Way House	seasonal	various	Clara Wilson, 333-7404
Wylie House	year around	various	Sherry Wise, 855-6224
Mother Hubbard's Cupboard	year around	education, resource	Libby Yarnell, 355-6843
WonderLab Garden	2 times monthly	various	Nancy White, 824-4426

**PLEASE WEAR YOUR NAME BADGE WHEN VOLUNTEERING.**

October 2008, Volume 24, Issue 10

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

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Have you registered to attend the workshop,  
*Water: Making Every Drop Count?*  
Registration forms are available at [www.mcmga.net](http://www.mcmga.net)

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