

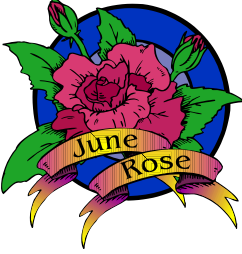


Roots & Shoots



Master Gardener
Society of
Oakland County, Inc.



June – July 2015

	<p>June 9, 2015 @ 6:30pm MGSOC General Society Meeting & Location Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church 5631 North Adams Rd, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304</p> <p>Speaker : Keith Berven Education: “Care and Raising Dahlias”</p> <p>A business meeting will take place, prior to the start of our Educational Program.</p>
	<p>July 14, 2015 @ 6:30pm MGSOC General Society Meeting & Location Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church 5631 North Adams Rd, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304</p> <p>Speaker : Donna and Les Abel Education: “All About Garlic”</p> <p>A business meeting will take place, prior to the start of our Educational Program.</p>
	<p>August 11, 2015 @ 6:30pm MGSOC General Society Meeting & Location Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church 5631 North Adams Rd, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304</p> <p>Speaker : Heather Glenday Education: “What’s Going on in the Garden”</p> <p>A business meeting will take place, prior to the start of our Educational Program.</p>



Notes from Carol

Each year we come together for a Volunteer Recognition Banquet to award Extension Master Gardeners various awards earned in the previous 12 months. The awards include for Basic and Advanced Certificates and Hours Pins from 250 to (this year for the 1st time) 4500! Thanks to the 117 Master Gardeners and their loved ones for coming to event. I'm always impressed that we get many people who come every year, whether or not they are getting an award. Thank you for your continuing support and love for the MG program.

Thanks also to the Banquet Committee. This group of dedicated volunteers is responsible for working out the yearly theme and centerpieces and securing all the great door prizes and raffle tickets. **Thank you Jan Stephens, Emily Banks, Corinne Anderson, Claudia York, Linda Wilcher, and Maria Sayre!**

A fun time was had by all and a hearty congratulations to the Awardees!

Basic

Karen Alexander, Sarah Alousi, Janis Alousi, Corinne Anderson, Paula Barylski, Cathy Bereza, Linda Bodzin, Cindy Bolterstein, Joan M Boritzki, Barbara Boswell, Karen Brant, Kathy Burkhart, Beth Burnett, Karol Carter, Jane Carvell, Amy Clark, Jacki Cohen, Ellen Collins, Sandy Cross, Laura Derosier, Jim Detjen, Susie Duquet, Rhonda Fackert, Ronna Freeland, Victoria Germond, Breanne Green, Connie Gregory, Lacie Grieves, Christine Harris, Karen Harris, Martha Hart, Joy Hershberger, Cathy Homeszyn, Mary Iorio, Becky Irey, Graydon Johnson, Cheri L Johnston, Margery Johnston, Vickie Krause, Genine Lang, Jane Leslie, Cathy Lichtman, John Lijek, Suane Loomis, Debbie Malbin, Sue Malone, Deborah Moore, Sherry Mueller, Brenna Patchen, Rhoda Pflum, Jean Pursell, Carrie Richardson, Kate Rosso, Jean Rukstele, Bob Sellman, Marylou Sleek, John W Slezinski, Sandy Smith, Erin Sniderman, Sally Spearin, Donald Sprague, Sandy Springer, Tiffany Streett, Margaret Sullivan, Karen Thompson, Denise Reinelt [Dioniza Toth-Reinelt], Christine Van Wagoner, Anna Vanhyfte, Donna Ventimiglia, Barb Waller, Dana Wehrly, Ann Z Wilbur, Shannon Winsted, Sue Woodsum, Claudia F York

Advanced

Karol Carter, Jane Carvell, Curt Dressler, Kit Duffield, Jan Elvekrog, Hank Ferry, Judy Francis, Bonita Glime, Marie Goedel, Clare Grady, Jen Grider, Christine Harris (?), Jean Hershey, Bev Hydo, Debbie Kearney, Teresa Larosa, Michelle Lewis, Debbie Malbin, Sue Malone, Tim McGee, Charlene McLeod, Jeanine Mooreland, Neleita Patterson, Cherilyn Phillabaum, Pam Rusin, Maria Sayre, Vanessa Schultz, Barb Sucher, Denise Reinelt [Dioniza Toth-Reinelt] Ann Tupper, Wanda J Whalen, Kathy Wolak, Judy Workings, Judie Wurges, Maria Yamasaki

250

Maureen Barnette, Pat Bordman, Penny [Mariemma] Brown, Susan Campbell [Bloomfield], Judith Davis, Margaret Dolan, Nancy Drayton, Hank Ferry, Ruth Frushour, Anna Garratt, Denny

Gross, Geri Harubin, Meg Lambert, Pat Larivee, Judy Locke, Don Mahalak, Marlene Ott, Ann Quail, Sharon M Schafer MD, Vanessa Schultz, Kathy Sobanski, Andrea Stromar, Barbara Sucher, Sally Teague, Craig Williamson, Judy Workings

500

Sally Bolle, Beth Burnett, Crystal Castle, Danni Connolly, Marilyn Cunningham, MaryCarole Haering, Christine Harris, Dawn Hughes, Peggy Keehner, Elizabeth Lilley, Sandy Macpherson, Charlene McLeod, Laura Miehl, Carolyn Morrison, Peg Palmer, Elizabeth Peters, Lucy Propst, Nancy Schmid, Brenda Shetterly, Mary Jo Showalter, Jerry Spezia

1000

John R Blust, Lynn Boehmer, Laurence Cathey, Catherine Connelly, Julie Cromer, Marilyn Dewitt, Irene Fahey, Sandy Nicks, Cheryl Quinn, Laura Sheffer, Betsy Stanis, Ella Steele, Rita Urbanski

1500

Denise Brown, Betsy Keidan, Paul Needle, William Pioch

2000

Jean Gramlich, Priscilla Needle, William Pioch

2500

Janie Grissom, Barb Near, Mary Schwark, Susan Tatus McLarty, Margaret Truza

4500

Sandie Parrott

The Master Gardener Society of Oakland County surprised me with a gift of an MG jacket! I wore it the next 2 days working in my yard and getting it quite muddy as I worked in the rain finishing the last task of the day. I now understand why so many Master Gardeners own one. It's the perfect gardening jacket!

Master Gardener Volunteer of the Year

This MG of the Year award is not just about hours worked (though I by no means discount that) it's about activities you are involved in, the benefit to our program and if you are taking any leadership roles. So many of you deserve it and this is a very hard decision.

This person was a member of the fall class of 1999 and immediately jumped into volunteering by writing articles for the Oakland Gardener which back then was a combined MGSOC and MSUE publication and by writing educational articles for their neighborhood association and more widely read publications. They also have done loads of hours over the years at the different

Farmers Market information booths and Ask a MG tables every year, not necessarily sticking to the markets closest to home. I have seen them in action at these booths and they are so good with our clients. This type of volunteering really suits their gregarious nature! They put in over 250 hours in two years!

In 2002 she started doing some volunteer work that made her highly visible to other MG's. She stated raising money of the MGSOC to use for their various projects by planning formal bus trips! She puts in 100's of hours organizing this every year and it show and her hard work shows as there never seem to be any glitches. They are so popular that this year the trip sold out in 10 days and we didn't even advertise it in the Oakland Gardener! Of course, I'm referring **Sandie Parrott!!!**

Sandie walked up to the podium and her standing ovation in absolute shock! I'm sure all would agree that it is very well-deserved! Please congratulate Sandie the next time you see her!

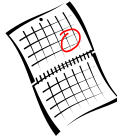
Call for Articles



This newsletter depends on you to submit articles for its bi-monthly editions. If you have visited an interesting garden while on vacation, have attended a noteworthy class, or are knowledgeable in a gardening-related topic, please feel free to write an article to share and submit it for publication in a future edition. You may report your writing time as Volunteer Hours.

The deadline for the June – July Edition is May 15, 2015.

E-mail your articles to Roots & Shoots editor Dick Wanat at rwanat155056mi@comcast.net



The Year at a Glance—MGSOC Meetings/Events for 2015

June 9	Keith Berven	Care and Raising Dahlias	
July 14	Donna and Les Abel	All About Garlic	
July 24-26		Trip: Chicago Botanical Gardens, Milwaukee, and More	SOLD OUT. Call Sandie Parrott 248-394-1532 to be waitlisted.
August 11	Heather Glenday	What's Going on in the Garden	
August 17		MGSOC Board Meeting	7PM @ Extension Office
September 8	Janet Macunovich	Bulbs: Choosing, Planting & Growing	
October 13	Karen Burke	Dehydrating Vegetables: Basics and Beyond	
October 19		MGSOC Board Meeting	7PM @ Extension Office
November 10	John Gaydos	New Annuals for 2016 and How to Use Annuals in the Garden	
November 16		MGSOC Board Meeting	7PM @ Extension Office
December 8	Holiday Potluck		

New Annuals and Perennials For 2015

George Papadelis hosted us in April at the Troy Telly's and gave a talk about the newest cultivars for 2015. He was quick to point out that for the most part he does not know how these plants will perform in the garden. We have all had the experience of being disappointed after buying something new with great expectations, but of course, we have had the opposite outcome as well.

George talks a mile a minute and shows slides at a similar speed, so I will pick out some highlights. When George speaks, you truly have to be there to get the picture.

ANNUALS

Alstroemeria Inticancha Antarctica, Sunshine, Indigo & Doba: this is a shorter version that spreads and has lots of flowers that last a long time.

Angelonia Serenita Pink Improved: seed-grown, 10-12", doesn't need deadheading. (My kind of plant!)

Begonia Bosso Nova Orange, Pink, Red: seed-grown begonias that can grow in the sun, branch profusely and trail.

Begonia Glory Pink, Yellow: grow in the shade with lots of small flowers on somewhat pendulous branches.

Begonia Unstoppable Upright Fire: has glossy brown leaves and orange flowers and can grow in sun to shade.

Bidens Hawaiian Flare 'Orange Drop' and 'Red Drop': trailing.

Calibrachoa Minifamous Double Chiffon, Double Purple: very floriferous but needs a 5.8 pH.

Celosia Arabonna Red: deep orange red 18-22" tall.

Coleus Blond Bombshell: lime green top with burgundy black back can grow in sun or shade.

Coleus Coleusaurus: golden with maroon leaves.

Coleus Kong Lime Sprite: seed-grown thrives in shade.

Coleus Under the Sea Yellowfin Tuna: looks like coral and is compact with a ruffled edge.

Coleus Purple Oak: big plant with lime-edged serrated leaves and almost black center grows in shade to part shade.

Cuphea Vermillionaire: attracts hummingbirds.

Gazania Gazebra Red: variegated gold/green leaves.

Gazania SunBathers Tikal: striped petals.

Gerbera Daisy Sweet Series: bloom all summer.

Gomphrena Pink Zazzle: likes hot, dry and sunny area. Larger flowers and a mounding growth habit.

Sunpatiens: various cultivars from New Zealand, some compact, some spreading and very tall.

Osteospermum Blue-Eyed Beauty: supposedly won't poop out in hot weather.

Petunia Velour Waves: various colors look very velvety.

Petunia Boom Vein Red 'n Yellow, Cascadia Autumn Mystery, Espresso Frappe Ruby, Fortunia Lavender Star: lots of variegation.

Petunia Sumo: flowers 6" wide!

SuperCal Grape, Cherry Improved: cross between petunia and calibrachoa.

Tomato Indigo Fireball Burpee, Ruby Burpee: pretty but questionable taste.

PERENNIALS

Anemone Fantasy Pocahantas, Pink Kiss: very floriferous.

Astilbe Chocolate Shogun: shiny dark brown foliage grows in shade/part shade.

Astrantia Star of Magic: variegated leaf for shade/part shade.

Buddleia Glass Slippers: 4-5' tall with lavender flowers.

Coreopsis Red Chiffon: yellow with maroon flowers grows 15-18".

Dianthus Kahori Raker 2014: long-flowering and needs no deadheading.

Gaillardia Gayla Corneto Blaze: grows 12-24" with trumpet-shaped flowers.

Gaillardia Sunset Mexican: yellow with rose centers.

Helleborus: new colors lavender, mango and ruffled white.

Heuchera 'Black Taffeta': black shiny ruffled leaves.

Hosta Mini Skirt: 5" tall with gold and green leaves.

Iberis Lavish: lavender flowers.

Lily oriental Magic Star: double red and white flowers.

Itoh Peony Raggedy Ann: cross between tree and shrub with white flowers and maroon centers.

Yucca Bronze Age: leaves with a purple cast.

Ketchup 'n Fries: tomato grafted to a potato. Why oh why? Maybe a horticulturalist was bored that day!

Happy gardening!

Submitted by Jean Gramlich

...from the cabbage patch



everyone.

Please remember to notify our Corresponding Secretary, Nancy Schmid, with member news so she can forward the appropriate correspondence to our fellow Master Gardeners. As corresponding secretary, Nancy sends cards of cheer, congratulations and condolences to our members as the situation warrants and Nancy would welcome being alerted to any such opportunities. She would also appreciate knowing whether or not the member wishes to share their news with

Nancy has been a Master Gardener since 2010 as well as a member of the Project Support Team since then. Nancy is also the keeper of the Master Gardener cookbooks so please keep her in mind if you have news to share or need a gift for gardener.

Contact Nancy at 248.651.7639 or 586.662.9394 (cell) or via email at nancy.c.s@comcast.net.

Peony Garden at Nichols Arboretum

David Michener from the University of Michigan spoke at our May meeting about the peony garden at the Nichols Arboretum which was founded by Dr. W.E. Upjohn in 1922. It is North America's largest remaining collection of 400 pairs of cultivars all introduced before 1950. All peonies originally came from Korea, Japan and China. The founding intent was to have “varieties of established merit” with 1/3 from France, 47% from the U.S., 8% from the U.K., 1% from the Netherlands and the rest of unknown origin. The garden was to be a cultural icon, a museum of peonies.

Many of the cultivars in the garden are now extinct in trade, but each has data in the archives of the arboretum. DNA samples can be used to figure out the history of a cultivar. The garden is visited by many international reviewers and experts. The arboretum is part of a peony conservation network including the Alaska Botanical Garden, Winterthur, the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum and the Brooklyn Botanical Garden. Peonies are judged as cut flowers. Unexpected factoid: Alaska is the largest exporter of cut peonies!

The garden is situated on the north side of a hill with well-drained clay soil. Gardeners use no fertilizers or pesticides. Tree peonies need a bit of shade to thrive. The garden is undergoing a long-term rejuvenation plan.

Submitted by Jean Gramlich



Notes from Nutcase Nursery

Can summer be here already? I haven't finished celebrating spring yet. It finally rained and the earth awakened and I am flabbergasted at the amount of attention needed at Nutcase. I feel as though I have been away for a very long time.



The seed-starting frenzy began in early April with mixed results as usual. The tomatoes were started in mid-month and some were up in five days. But there was no pea-planting on St. Patrick's Day, nor were any potatoes planted because the soil needed to be turned so the leaf mulch that spent the winter on it could be **in** it. We were extremely fortunate to have good friends who spent an entire day tilling in shredded leaves and cleaning tree roots from the big vegetable garden so I could quit whining. That garden used to be turned religiously because tree roots would take over if it were not done regularly but due to circumstances beyond my control it's grooming has not been happening the last few years.

The subject of tilling has been a source of much discussion among my fellow gardeners lately and I've added it to the list of things you just don't want to get into, like politics and religion. From the anti-tillers to the micro tillers, I would prefer to consider each situation on its own merits. As Master Gardeners we should know by now that micro tilling is not a good thing for the earth. It totally upsets the microcosms within and those are the creatures we depend on to keep things going beneath the surface. I like sticking with a consistency somewhere in between cement and sand, complete with lumps and clumps, just like real mashed potatoes. I had to keep an eye on my wonderful but zealous helpers who seemed to feel that finer was better. Please don't kill the worms!

After the soil was prepped, I prepared to plant potatoes but unfortunately I discovered the tubers were shot. Shame on me! The last time I checked them they were chitted and ready to go but the garden wasn't. Now they're crispy critters in need of new ones and just another item for The List.

I can't bring myself to write about lone pepper seedling so I will pick up where I left off last issue. The timing is right to bring up the subject of garden pests and we left off with the squash borer as pest number five. Last year, the borers appeared mid to late June so now is the time to be checking for sightings and signs. One suggestion to thwart them is to plant vining crops later and using floating row covers until the first female flowers form. I am afraid to deliberately delay planting because I am already always behind.

The infamous Japanese beetle came in at number six on the pest hit parade. Though they don't present themselves as problems in extremely hot or cold climes, they are much disliked by people and much liked by chickens and ducks. Traps, milky spore, even row covers had little efficacy. Hand-picking was hands-down the recommended way to go whether you feed them to the birds or not. Some respondents grew raspberries as trap crops but I have noticed here they have different tastes from year to year. Only once did they choose my raspberries to destroy, but

other years it would be roses or wisteria. Last year we were warned in early July that the JB's were coming in from the southeast.

The best controls I have at Nutcase are the three pairs of robins who patrol for all types of wiggling baby food. Robins have nested on the front porch light for decades and they are very vocal about their territory. When the squirrels don't stop by to torture the Dingo she has to resort to chasing the robins for entertainment, behavior upon which I frown. I need them to make sure there are no surviving cutworms, etc. in the veggie patch. Wild birds are a natural control and they can keep the Japanese beetle population and other pests in check. We adjust how we use the multitude of feeders here because we use the birds to eat weeds seeds and pests.

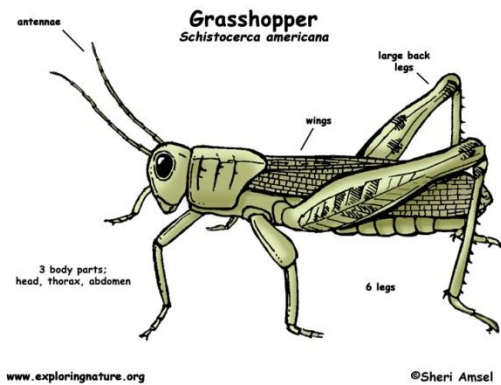
Speaking of entertainment, I have found pest number seven to be a source of amusement. Of course, this wouldn't be Nutcase Nursery without a little twisted humor. As I have been working in the front gardens, I wind up chatting with people who pass by. Twice in April the topic of tomato worms came up and both gardeners made faces, did a little "cootie" dance and said they hated them. After a little more gardening-related talk, I asked both people (who don't even know each other) if they ever saw a hummingbird moth. I got the same response from each: "Oh, I love them!"

Sometimes I don't know what comes over me. When I told them that the sphinx or hummingbird moths were the adult form of the tomato and tobacco hornworms, they were quite shocked. I just stood there having a Master Gardener Moment, grinning from ear to ear. Oh I so love IPM!

In over thirty years of growing tomatoes here at Nutcase, I have only had two hornworm attacks. One of my brothers near Howell had them year after year until he finally planted the dill seeds I kept giving him (year after year). It could be weird but I have to admit that I find the tomato hornworms rather fascinating. They can defoliate an entire tomato patch in an afternoon. They are absolute eating machines, devouring leaves and stems in short order. Fortunately they are easy to hand pick because they are large, you can outrun them, and they leave equally large amounts of easily seen poopage as their calling cards. It is important when you are handpicking them to leave any hornworms that have what look like little grains of rice on them. Those would be predatory wasps and it's best to let nature take its course. According to the survey, good companion plants for reducing hornworm problems were zinnias and borage. So far, my reseeded dill seems to do the trick. The only thing I have to worry about with it is too much in the wrong places and timing it with cucumbers so I can make pickles.

Next on the list of pests we love to hate is the cutworm. The numbers show that collars have a 93 per cent success rating, and collars are a fantastic way of using empty toilet tissue rolls. Again, birds come in handy for cleaning out cutworms, especially if you cultivate the soil a few times before planting. One thing to remember about cutworms is that even a pencil or twig placed against a stem of a pepper plant for instance can prevent cutworm damage because they need to curl themselves completely around the plant to cut it. Collars can be made in minutes and it's so worth it when you eliminate the heartbreak of waking up the morning after setting in all of your best looking tomato and pepper plants only to find them all flat on the ground, whacked off at the soil line.

Another method of keeping cutworms at bay is planting in black plastic. The key there is to cover your soil, and let it be for at least a week, preferably one with a lot of sunshine. This will warm your soil and I don't know if the cutworms cook or vacate but I don't have any problems as long as I wait a sufficient amount of time for things to heat up. Black plastic also has the advantages of thwarting weeds, holding moisture, providing extra warmth for the heat-loving stuff, and cuts down on disease because you don't have so many spores splashing up from bare soil. The season I had the above-mentioned cutworm invasion was the only one I didn't use black plastic mulch. Construction grade, 10-foot wide rolls sure beat the heck out using garbage bags, which is what I started with many years ago.



Grasshoppers came in at number nine and once again, chickens are meant to be in charge. Those of us without chickens may need them more than we think because this hopper problem seems to be getting worse according to the data. Many people reported that increased precipitation seems to trigger a population explosion but at this point it's difficult to tell if we will finish with a wet spring or not. So far for this year we are quite high on dry. The only problem we have with grasshoppers at Nutcase, since we've never really had a plague, is that the Dingo eats them which completely grosses me out.

Almost 40 percent of respondents named the cucumber beetle as pest number 10, primarily because it carries bacterial wilt to cukes and melons, but not watermelons. Chickens were again deemed successful but floating row covers offered the most success (80 percent) followed by companion planting and yellow sticky traps. Cleanup in fall is vital as is crop rotation because the spotted cucumber beetle has one or two generations here and the striped cucumber beetle has one generation. According to my sources, it is the striped pest that spreads bacterial wilt. Although respondents did not list what plants they used as companions, cukes supposedly like being near cabbage, corn, early potatoes, radishes and sunflowers. Last year the bee-decked out little beggars generated warnings from headquarters in early July. I am pretty much an equal-opportunity hater of flyers wearing black and yellow --- except for bees and some wasps --- be they striped or spotted or four-lined.

Corn earworms came in at number 11 on the hit list mentioned by just under 40 per cent of respondents. Most reported that oiling the newly-emerged silks with a few drops of canola oil or olive oil pretty much took care of business. You can also plant corn known for tighter husks at the ear tip and many people said just to flick off the tip if it has a resident and get over it. A bigger pest for corn was the RACCOON and they were the primary reason to many respondents said they no longer grew corn. We had one that moved in one year. He made a hangout in the willow tree, a perch where he could have the corn patch in sight at all times. We finally managed to trap the little bandit and took it for a ride about seven miles away. The criminal returned although Himself refused to believe that it was the same critter. If it wasn't the same raccoon, it must have been a twin with good directions. Here, the bigger pest is the Dingo. She is sure that

the corn is hers and her methods for checking its development make a lot of sense. I just don't like sharing my sweet corn.

Winding down to number twelve on the hate list we have the whitefly, hated by 36 per cent of respondents. Insecticidal soap had a 90 per cent effectiveness rating and many people said they used regular dish soap. I do not have the research but it was mentioned that repeated use of these two cleansing potions can reduce yields but so also does the whitefly. I picked up a whitefly infestation from a nursery and unfortunately put those plants in my greenhouse which turned into a breeding dome for this pest. Of course I also had the plants in the house but the yellow sticky traps worked very well. It also helped to turn on the vacuum cleaner and shake the stricken plants. The little flyers take off and it doesn't hurt my feelings a bit to suck them up into little R2D2. Insecticidal soap and hort oil were also rated as top-rated natural methods for control.

As far as other things to watch out for this summer, we have the brown marmorated stinkbug (though none were reported in Oakland last year), downy mildew, late blight, blossom end rot, caused by a tomato's inability to transport calcium due to lack of water, and no doubt a few other problems. (Blossom end rot can also occur when the plants are in pots and plots that are too small. Large tomato plants can have roots that extend out 1 to 3 feet.)

Perhaps on the same subject of things to look out for, how long has it been since you had a tetanus shot? And do you wear your gloves and sunscreen?

Way back when the Professional Gardeners Association started, we had a speaker whom I believe was an occupational safety nurse. She spoke of the opportunity for damaging oneself gardening for a living. Everything from carpal tunnel syndrome to spinal damage is available to the devoted gardener. One thing I never thought about was the "opportunity" to be exposed to tetanus in the soil and it's something you should consider, especially as you're doing your volunteer hours. And skin protection is another story because you can't just consider sunscreen all you need.

I didn't know until a few weeks ago that Belles of Ireland (*Moluccella laevis*) have nasty little cactus needle-like thorns on the dried up stems I grabbed on my way past the shed, not wearing gloves. And I always manage to back into the flowering quince at least once a season. Mistakes are opportunities to learn lessons. Sometimes they are dangerous, as in arguing with bees when you are allergic, or thinking that your hand is quicker than hot grease. Some mistakes are just silly, like pretending you can outrun the sprinkler in flip-flops at your age. Some are perpetual, like the story I got the other night.

"Worked outside all day cleaning up the yard and now I've got a rash."

"Did you wear your gloves?" "Yes."

"Long sleeves or short?" "Short."

"Did you take your Benadryl yet?"

It happens every spring. But there are things in the garden that can cause problems only sporadically and those are the mistakes that are opportunities to learn. You might be sensitive to

a certain plant but only at very specific times of the season. And it may not be because of the particular quality of the plant so much but rather the amount to which you have been exposed.

At one of the Master Gardener work sites there was a large ornamental planting of lavender that needed a trim. Two people teamed up to tackle the job and spent a very warm August day, pruning the lavender when they were flush with resin. Neither person had ever had a sensitivity to the plant but the combination of the heat, concentration of essential oil and length of exposure ganged up on them making them quite uncomfortable. But all was not lost because they smelled **wonderful**.

And speaking of wonderful, just before dark the other evening I was out searching for a spot to put a peony that was in need of a better location than under a rapidly expanding Norway spruce. As I searched the north side of the veg garden for just a few square feet for a wonderful cause, I glanced over my left shoulder trying to avoid backing into the flowering quince. There was a hummingbird, attracted to the red/orange flowers! I hope it was Herald, the lone hummer who has visited in the past. I had put the feeders out just the week before and the hummingbird expert who spoke a few years ago told us to put them out the first of April. Of course I was late as usual but it didn't appear that anything was available to attract them. Once it finally rained, blooms burst and I am hoping the hummer stays a while.

Here's wishing you a pest-free, safe and happy gardening season. You know what "they" say: "It's a jungle out there," so please be careful, feed the birds, keep your tools clean and water the trees.

Maybe next issue we'll talk favorite weeds.





SOMEONE / SOMEWHERE



Rita Urbanski was born in Detroit. She was seven years old when her family moved to Ferndale and lived there until she got married. Rita received her Bachelor's Degree in math at Nazareth College in Kalamazoo and taught math at Marian High School in Birmingham and Shrine High School in Royal Oak.

Rita met her husband Jim at a college dance. He came with a friend of Rita's girlfriend, met and danced with Rita, and they are still dancing together. Always striving for higher achievement, she took one college class at a time when her children, Jeff and Julie, were young, while she worked part time as a high school teacher, and took care of her home. It took her eight years to receive her Master's Degree in math at Oakland University. Quite an accomplishment! Rita later taught math at Oakland Community College.

Now it is 46 years later, and both Rita and Jim are retired. Of course the two grandchildren, Sophia, who is into swimming and Isabela, who loves dance and the pep team keep them busy going to after-school activities. It's so gratifying to see your children grow into wonderful adults and then see your grandchildren do so well in their activities.

When Rita's children were young, they had a cement sand box, lots of toys and fun in the backyard. When the children got too old for the sand box, it was replaced by a flower bed with 3 roses, slowly other flowers and vegetables were planted. Rita was a self-taught gardener and loved it.

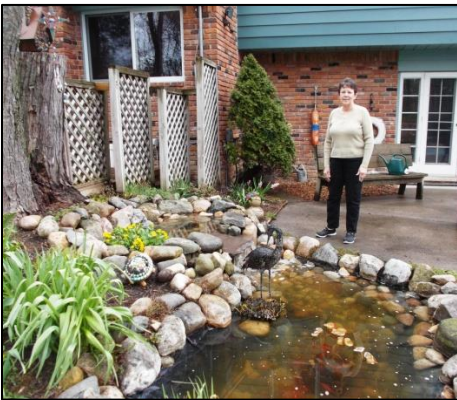


When Rita retired from teaching, she worked at Bordine's Nursery. *What a joy it was.* Her husband said she really didn't make any money, because she spent her paycheck at Bordine's. That's a hazard many of us gardener's have. In 2007 while she was at Bordine's, they had a Weeping Alaskan Cedar that was dying. It was 5 feet tall but not doing well at all. Instead of throwing it away, they gave it to Rita. She took it home, planted it, gave it a lot of TLC and today it is approx 15 feet tall and doing well. In its' native habitat, the Weeping Alaskan Cedar generally grows to 90 feet and can live up to 3,500 years in the wild. As an ornamental it pretty well grows to 50 feet with a 20-foot spread. Since it grew 10 feet in 8 years at Rita's home, we'll have to check the tree in 2047 to see if it has grown to 50 feet.

Rita and Jim have lived in Troy for 26 years and their love of gardening can be easily seen and enjoyed by everyone. In her front, side and back yard, which are quite large, Rita has an herb garden that includes mint, oregano, sage, feverfew, hyssop, parsley dill, and more. Tiny strawberries, and rhubarb from her mother's yard, grow to make a delicious pie. Fresh raspberries, also from her mother, are a delight to pick for her morning cereal or muffins. You will see different species of *Hydrangea* and various roses, and of course the Sweet Lifeberry Goji shrub she received at our last MG Conference. A small pond makes a nice stop for all the birds, as does the large pool for humans. I'm sure I could fill the rest of the page with the many beautiful things in her yard. The deer and rabbits also like her garden. They think everything tastes so good.

Wanting to learn more about gardening, Rita took the Master Gardener Course in 2003. Bowers Farm was the recipient of the hours she needed for her Basic and Advanced Certification in 2004 and 2006. Working at Bowers farm was educational and fun. She met many interesting people and made new friends. She joined the Master Gardener Society of Oakland County in 2004. Rita earned her 1,000 hour pin this year and received it at the MG Recognition Banquet.

Their garden was on the Troy Garden Walk in 2000 and 2007. Also in those years, the city of Troy presented them two awards, for "Best Landscape", and "Best Yard Garden".



Since 1998 Rita has been a member of The Troy Garden Club, a branch of the Women's National Farm and Garden Association (WNF&GA). Rita is chairman of the gardens at The Troy Historic Village. The ladies have planted evergreens, fountain grass, purple leaf cannas, petunias, marigold, daffodil, an herb garden and other plants. The Caswell House was moved to the Historic Village in 1968. Years later, Rita was able to go to the original location of the home and received permission to dig up a cluster from the original lilac bush and transplant it near the house. That is dedication to being authentic.

In 2008 - 2010 Rita was the Recording Secretary for WNF&GA. For the past 5 years she was on the planning committee for the national meetings. One of her responsibilities was to charter the bus for people from Michigan and Ohio to the conference site, something she has continued to do for many years.

At its' 40th anniversary in 2011, the Troy Garden Club hosted the Michigan Division of the WNF&GA, at which time, Rita was proudly installed as the 42nd Michigan Division President for 2011 - 2013. Rita was one of the coordinators for the 2015 National Conference that took place in Washington D.C., May 13-17.

This year, 2015, Rita is President Elect for the Women's National Farm and Garden Association and will become President in 2016. What an honor! With all her experience these many years on various committees, she will be an excellent President. Congratulations Rita!!!

WNF&GA is involved in many educational farm and garden programs throughout the United States and many other countries. As President in 2016, Rita plans to go to England and meet with the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW). The ACWW works in partnership with its members, offering mutual support, friendship and practical help to women and communities around the world. There are over 460 member societies active in over 70 countries. ACWW gives women a voice at the International level through its links with UN Agencies and has an Advisory Seat at the UN. This should be quite an interesting meeting.

Rita Urbanski is a woman full of ideas, goals, and energy. She will serve well as the 45th President of the Women's Farm & Garden Association. WNF&GA has sponsored and funded several major projects at the U.S. National Arboretum in Washington, D.C. The Mrs. Francis King Dogwood Garden was dedicated in 1952 in memory of the first WNF&GA President. Now every 2 years a Dogwood tree is planted in the arboretum in honor of the outgoing National President. We look forward to seeing this Dogwood tree with Rita's name on it in 2018.

Submitted by Sylvia A. Schult

“It's All About the Soil”

So sayeth the urban farming revolution guru Will Allen, who spoke at the Oakland County Master Gardener annual conference on April 25th. Will is the son of an Alabama sharecropper and a former professional basketball player who has spent many years providing healthy food to underserved communities from a facility in downtown Milwaukee. Now past his athletic prime, he is still an imposing presence. TIME magazine named him one of the 100 most influential people in the world. The MacArthur Foundation gave him a so-called “genius” grant. Growing Power, Inc. has been in business for 22 years, runs 25 farms and has 100 diverse employees from the neighborhood. He has created a sustainable local food system which produces fish and vegetables throughout the year.

What is good food? You start by growing good soil. Since most of the area he works in is contaminated, he creates the soil through composting waste vegetable matter collected from supermarkets and restaurants as well as other organic matter. He uses worms to speed the composting process. He originally bought worms, but they are prolific creatures which multiply by 4 every 4 months. Compost must be made up of a ratio of 1:1 carbon to nitrogen. If the compost is turned, it is ready in 4 months; static compost is ready in 8 months.

He raises vegetables in raised beds outside or in hoopouses. The raised beds are often sited on asphalt without breaking the asphalt up. He piles 10” of wood chips (local utilities and their tree contractors are good sources) on top of soil or a parking lot and then tops the wood chips with 2’ of finished unsifted compost. A 20' x 90' hoopouse takes 100 yards of compost (a large dump truck holds about 10 yards). More compost is added for each new crop. 150 different vegetable crops are raised in the fields.

Aquaponics is an important part of the farming process. Lake perch and tilapia are the fish of choice at the moment, but he has thoughts of growing eels in the future. The eggs are gently squeezed out of the fish, and then the milt is squeezed out and mixed with the eggs. The fingerlings are fed black soldier fly larvae. The water from the fish tanks that contains fish waste is used to water and fertilize the greenhouse plants, some of which are grown in trays in vertical layers for maximum use of space. Water catchment systems are used to conserve this precious resource.

The hoopouses produce food all winter. Compost is banked around the hoop houses and produces heat as the material decomposes, and solar panels are used for other energy needs. An anaerobic digester turns food waste into methane to run a generator. No fossil fuels are used.

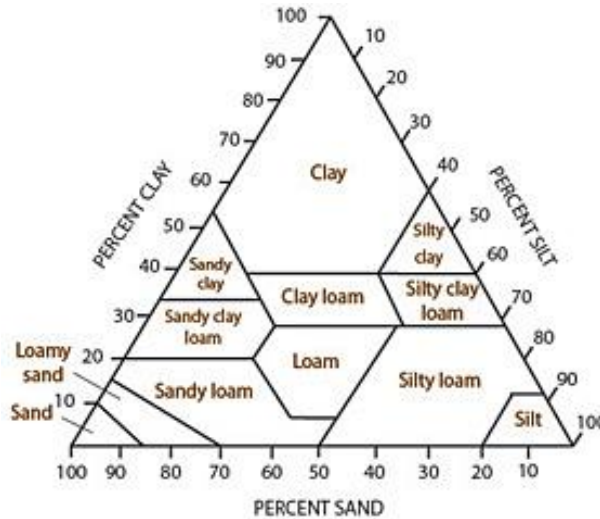
Microgreens can be cut every seven days. Mushrooms are a good cash crop as well. Goats are raised to make artisan cheese, and of course, add their manure to the compost piles. Bees add honey to the product line-up and assure pollination of the crops.

Will sees this project not only as a way of growing healthy food in an area that used to be a “food desert,” but also as an engine of the economic future of a vibrant, diverse community with social justice for all the residents. He hires people with a criminal record to help them become a

positive part of the community. An example of the creative use of plants to improve the community is that the company planted bedding plants along streets and corners where the drug dealers used to hang out.

The center is also used for community education, teaching people how to grow their own food and preserve it as well. Many non-profit agencies have helped in the formation of Growing Power, Inc., and now centers are located all over the world including Ukraine, Kenya and London.

Submitted by Jean Gramlich



Citizen Science Projects

Observations by ordinary citizens can add data that can help us understand natural phenomena. The data gathered by volunteers can show long-term trends or discover new information. There are many such projects, and I will discuss just a few of them.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources has trained volunteers to survey frogs and toads for the last 20 years. There are 13 species which occur in Michigan, a few of them limited to small areas of the state. Volunteers count them by learning to recognize their calls and estimating the numbers they are hearing. A volunteer has an assigned route with 10 stops surveyed once a month in April, May and June and often continues on the route for many years. My route in Rose Township near my home is a great place because there are many wetlands that no one has filled in as in many areas of southeast Michigan. The first stop on my route is my house where the American toads have been singing me to sleep for several weeks. They were preceded by the wood frogs, chorus frogs and spring peepers, and the bull frogs will be using their stentorian voices well into the summer.

Another project I participate in is the feeder watch survey by Cornell Ornithological Laboratory. Thousands of feeder watchers count the number of species and individuals at their feeders from November to April. For me this project makes the dull days of winter more interesting.

Recently I saw a report from Cornell mapping the incidence of Carolina wrens showing that their territory is expanding north, just another fact that points to climate change and its effect on animals.

The Audubon Society has conducted the Christmas Bird Count for the last 100 years! The Oakland Audubon Society has groups surveying territories in northern Oakland County on the Saturday before Christmas every year, and I have surveyed a territory in Addison Township with a partner for a number of years. Other Audubon groups survey in other parts of the country, and, indeed, all over the world.

A research project at Lake St. Clair Metropark has taught me a lot about birds. Allen Chartier is a licensed bird bander, and he needs lots of volunteers to help. Although I think that my vision is not good enough to get birds out of the nets (I'm afraid I would break a tiny little bird leg), I can help in many other ways.

The National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration now has 10,000 volunteers who report precipitation online every day using simple but very accurate gauges. Although the chore can be a little daunting in the winter – melting snow and measuring old snowfall and new snowfall in all kinds of weather – we contribute data that is very important in understanding weather and climate trends. Part of my training was to go to the National Weather Service station in White Lake to see the release of a weather balloon and to watch the radar on the computers. A webinar on how they use weather data to predict agricultural crops worldwide was quite fascinating to me. Besides, keeping track of rainfall makes me a better gardener!

The North American butterfly count is another citizen project I have enjoyed. I have no expertise in identifying butterflies, but I can help spot them and have fun doing it. Children particularly love this activity. We visit the same land conservancy property with a lovely prairie and some woods each summer. People concerned about monarch butterflies tag them in hopes of getting more data to help this species which has declined precipitously in recent years.

Another project that interests me is reporting the blooming time of various native plants. Aldo Leopold started observing bloom times and bird migration times in Wisconsin in the 1940s and wrote a book on his observations, [A Sand County Almanac](#). Over 30 years he noted that spring came earlier over time and expressed concern over the fact that the timing of insects emerging, plants blooming and birds returning were getting out of sync. I have not yet signed up for this project.

There are many other citizen science projects available for people with interests in astronomy, animal populations, etc. Some can be done sitting in front of your computer. There is so much data these days that professional scientists don't have time to analyze it, so ordinary people can make a worthwhile contribution.

Submitted by Jean Gramlich



Autumn olive

Invasive Shrub Control Volunteering

Reflections from a first-timer

Almost spring in Island Lake Recreation Area. Still snow on the ground, autumn olive just starting to leaf out. Before that Sunday afternoon, I had only seen pictures of what autumn olive looked like. But there's nothing like having it identified in person and then seeing it every few feet and spending hours trying to cut it down that you really get to know it. And field identification was only one of the many benefits of volunteering that day.

Every week in the Oakland Gardener you see these invasive species volunteer opportunities. Of course, none of us master gardener volunteers/volunteer trainees ever thought, "Ewww, I don't want to do that." Yeah right. Well, I'm here to tell you it was such a great experience. It was a long winter (yes, they all seem long now). My only time spent outdoors was running from my house to the comfort of my cold car along with the necessary shoveling. So three hours in the sun with a lopper and a dabber and 20 new friends was heaven. The best way to describe how I felt afterward is . . . I FELT SO ALIVE.

And isn't that why we all love gardening so much?

We (yes, I dragged my husband along) pulled up to the Meadow Picnic Area in Island Lake Recreation Area and were shocked to see 15 people or so gathering around a DNR truck with the familiar logo on the side. I had expected that we might be the only volunteers there. In the middle of them stood Laurel Malvitz-Draper, a Natural Resource Steward from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. If you've met her, you already know what a knowledgeable, capable, friendly, down-to-earth leader and teacher she is. She knew many of the volunteers from before. Apparently many are regulars. They knew that she has a 17-month-old son and a supportive husband. Already I could tell it was a good group, all ages from middle school up to retirees, about equal number of men and women.

Laurel explained to everyone that we would be working in the area of the park just behind her truck, and told us how that area had previously been hit by oak wilt. The oaks had been taken down and since then, invasive shrubs had begun taking over. Our job that afternoon was to take loppers and cut the plants, then dab them with herbicide, all with the goal of opening the area back up so native plants can flourish. All the loppers and dabbers were provided, even gloves too if we needed!




Glossy buckthorn

Then she took us out to identify the plants, while the regulars got started. In addition to autumn olive, we learned to identify two other invasive shrubs, honeysuckle and glossy buckthorn.


Once we knew what to look for, we headed out to do our thing. A mother and son worked together to cut a giant autumn olive down, while other volunteers cut thin shoots that were a foot or two tall just planning their aggressive takeover. The plants, not the volunteers. It was so nice to see people of all ages working together, everyone at their own pace, out in nature, feeling alive. By the time we were done, we had a huge pile of branches, twigs and trunks ready to be removed. As for Laurel, she jokes she can't ever take a walk in the woods without noticing what invasive plants need to be removed. And as for me, I'm going to come back in a couple weeks when the autumn olive is fully leafed out so I can see what it looks like then.

So, if you need hours or just want to take part in the fun, [click here](#) for a list of workdays and to register.

A Field Identification Guide to
Invasive Plants
in Michigan's Natural Communities



A resource for public land managers, land stewards and volunteers engaged in conserving & restoring Michigan's native plant & animal communities



Check out this excellent field guide [here](#)

Submitted by Dana Wehrly



Some Information You Should Know

MGSOC Board Members

President: Margy Truza.....(248)644-3560
1st Vice President: Sally Bolle.....(248)909-8668
2nd Vice President: Margaret Dolan.....(248)770-0524
Secretary: Ruth Vrbensky.....(248)969-6904
Treasurer: Crystal Castle(248) 860-5445

MSU Extension Oakland County Coordinator

Advisor: Carol Lenchek (248)858-0900
lenchekc@oakgov.com

Team Coordinators

Bowers Farm: Sally Bolle (Tuesday Lead)..... 909-8668
Open (Saturday Lead)
Project Support: Denise Brown (248)640-5977
Hospitality: Kathy Sobanski.....(248)858-6980
Hospitality Greeter: Carole Carroll.....(248)321-8669
& Sally Teague.....(248)546-0280
Membership: Julie Kowalk.....(248)
Programs: Betty Peters.....(248)651-8374
Door prize Coordinator: Janie Grissom.....(248)887-6096
Trips & Tours: Sandie Parrott(248)394-1532
Corresponding Secretary: Nancy Schmid..(248)651-7639
Communications: Lucy Propst.....(248)885-1082
Roots & Shoots Editor: Dick Wanat.....(248)644-5699

Web Site Address: www.mgsoc.org
Webmaster: Sheri Trout sheri@oaklandweb.com
Web Site Calendar: Peggy Wanat pwanat43@comcast.net

Mission Statement

It is the Master Gardener Society of Oakland County's Mission to assist, enable, and encourage its members to use their horticultural knowledge and experience to help the people of their communities, enrich their lives through gardening and good gardening practices.

Michigan State University Extension- Oakland County
“Bringing Knowledge to Life”

North Office Building, #26 East
1200 N. Telegraph Road
Pontiac, MI 48341
Office Hours: M- F 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Carol Lenchek...248-858-0900
Extension Educator~Master Gardener Program
Email: lenchekc@oakgov.com

Richard Wooten...248-858-0529
Interim MSUE District Coordinator
Email: wooten@anr.msu.edu

Cathy Morris...248-858-0887
Horticulture Office Assistant
Email: morrisc@oakgov.com

Charlene Molnar...248-858-0902
Horticulture Advisor
Plant & Pest Hotline
Hours of operation vary seasonally

Lynne Shull...248-858-1639
*Clerk & Contact for Certification of Volunteer
& Education Hours*
Email: shulll@oakgov.com

Robin Danto...248-858-0904
Extension Educator~Food Safety
Email: dantor@oakgov.com

Bindu Bhakta...248-858-5198
Extension Educator~Water Quality
Email: bhaktabi@msu.edu

Ed Scott...248-858-0905
Extension Educator~4-H Youth Programs
Email: escott3@anr.msu.edu

Saneya Hamler...248-452-9726
Extension Educator~Children, Youth & Family
Email: hamlersa@msu.edu

Roots & Shoots is a joint publication of MSU Extension-Oakland county and Master Gardener Society of Oakland County. Submit articles for publication to Dick Wanat rwanat155056mi@comcast.net by suggested deadlines below.

January 15	for February/March issue	March 15	for April/May issue
May 15	for June/July issue	July 15	for August/September issue
September 15	for October/November issue	November 15	for December/January issue

To help reduce mailing expenses, if you have Internet access we encourage you to read Roots & Shoots online at the Master Gardener Society website www.mgsoc.org.

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION



MSU is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are available to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status.