

Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer Newsletter

KEEP IT GROWING!

November - December 2018

Volume 15, Issue 6

Welcome to David Marrison!

We welcome Coshocton County's new Agriculture and Natural Resources educator, David Marrison, who started working at his new position in September. Marrison is not new to OSU Extension; he held the same position in Ashtabula County for 21 years. Part of his responsibilities will be to coordinate the Master Gardener Volunteer program and we look forward to working with him!

New Programs Planned

Dr. Tom Blaine, OSU Associate Professor, will share the history and trends of climate change in his presentation "**Global Climate Change - How Does It Affect YOU?**" on Thursday, November 29, 2018. The program will be held at the Frontier Power Community Room at 770 South 2nd Street in Coshocton from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. There is no fee to attend this program and it is open to all! Courtesy reservations are requested so program materials can be prepared. For more information, call the OSU Extension Office at (740) 622-2265.

Our "**Beat the Blahs**" series has been well-attended over the past few years and is a great way to "scratch" our gardening "bug" when we can't actually garden! Sessions are being planned for 2019 - watch for details at www.osu.coshocton.edu

The "**Create a Perennial Bed**" series is on-going – two sessions were held in August and September on preparing a site and on planting cover crops to reduce soil compaction. Two more sessions are scheduled for January 16 and February 6, 2019, from 5:30 to 7:00 pm at Clary Gardens and will explore garden design and plant selection. For more information contact Coshocton County - OSU Extension at (740) 622-2265 or e-mail marrison.2@osu.edu

MGVs Win State Awards

Coshocton County MGVs are pleased to report that our "Beat the Blahs" series was named as a 2017 Project of the Year for small MGV groups at the state conference this fall. Our county group also earned a platinum award for accomplishments in 2017.

Thank You for Attending Our Recent Programs!

Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteers were involved with several programs recently.

In September, a joint program with Muskingum County and Ohio AgrAbility, "**Gather Around the Garden; Ambition Through the Years**" was held in Zanesville and focused on how to plan and practice safe habits while managing physical limitations and preventing injury. Ohio AgrAbility promotes success in gardening and agriculture for individuals and families coping with disability or long-term health conditions. Info about the program can be found at: <https://agrability.osu.edu/>

As usual, MGVs put up a booth in the youth building at the Coshocton County Fair. Our theme this year was "**Un-bee-lievable Solitary Bees**" and focused on native bees that do not live in a hive nor make honey. Many timely fact sheets and forty packets of butterfly weed seed were picked up at the booth; more are available at the Extension office.

Over forty people from four counties attended "**Mushroom Madness**" in October to learn more about mushrooms from Erika Lyon, Extension Educator for Agriculture and Natural Resources in Jefferson and Harrison Counties. 91.3% indicated their identification skills increased as a result of attending.

Several MGVs and interns manned a display at the first stop (The Animal Boutique and Villas) on the Coshocton County **Fall Foliage and Farm Tour**. The display included information about both solitary bees and native trees. More than 1300 people from 29 Ohio counties and 5 other states registered for the tour. Although the leaves had not yet changed to their prettiest colors, visitors enjoyed the rural scenery and the various stops along the tour. MGVs donated two books, *Ohio Trees* and *Gardenpedia*, as door prizes; the lucky winners were Tess Douglass and Joe Haren.

"A weed is but an unloved flower."

~ Ella Wheeler Wilcox

Seed Saving

By Margaret Lowe, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

Seed saving is a way for gardeners to save money, preserve favorite or rare varieties, adapt varieties to local conditions, and create self-satisfaction.

Start gradually with one or two favorite plants. This year I am really interested in saving seeds from lima beans that my grandparents and parents grew year after year. They are called Jackson Wonder and are considered a bush type; however, mine always vine and grow taller than I am. They are heat and drought tolerant. When the pod is first picked and shelled, the beans are large, beautiful and a speckled purplish color, but they become a dark red and cream color when dry. When my parents grew them and my mother canned quarts and quarts of them after my two brothers and I had shelled the beans. We always had a large garden and those lima beans and all the other foods that were preserved were delicious eating during the winter season.

This year I only had a few beans as I have not planted them for two years and I was not sure the seeds were viable. I planted them in a large container, with stakes, on my deck and they grew very well. I now have a large plate covered with beans that are drying for me to save. I am very pleased to have these for next year. Also, I have learned I can grow lima beans in a container very well if they are staked.

These bean seeds are relatively dry when picked and do not require much care to save. However, if you want to save melon, squash, pumpkin seeds or any other seeds like these, you need to rinse the seeds with cool water until the flesh is removed - this may take a few rinses. If they are not cleaned it will take longer for the seeds to dry and they may become moldy.

Harvest and keep only healthy-looking seeds with no blemishes. Look for plump and uniform seeds. Also, gather seeds from several plants; this will increase the chances for having seeds that will sprout and produce more. Store seeds where it is cool, dry and dark as sunlight and moisture will bring about sprouting and ruin viability. Many people store seeds in their refrigerator. I place mine in old seed packets and then into a cardboard box. Other vegetable and flower seeds may be saved in similar ways. The most important parts of saving are using good seeds and drying them thoroughly.

Give Your Pumpkins and Gourds a Second Chance!

Pumpkins and gourds are on porches, posts, sidewalks, steps – everywhere! Soon we'll be seeing these Halloween and autumn decorations at the curb, ready for trash pick-up. Save the pumpkins!

Those ornamentals can be re-cycled, so to speak. Pumpkins (a type of gourd) can be cut open to remove the seeds which can be dried to eat, plant or to feed the birds. After the inside has been cleaned out, the shells can be used as bird feeders by cutting them in half or cutting a hole in the side. Other gourds can be dried to use for craft projects, to make bird houses, and much more – check online or at the library for more ideas!

Ideas for Feeding the Birds

Suet feeders are great for our native birds, particularly the ones who like to eat insects! Suet cakes can be purchased and hung in a “suet cage” or you can make your own. Several recipes are available online or in nature magazines. Here is a good basic recipe from Birds and Blooms magazine:

- Melt one cup lard and one cup peanut butter (creamy or crunchy) over low heat.
- Mix together 2 cups of quick oats; 2 cups of birdseed; 1 cup of yellow cornmeal; and 1 cup of flour.

Pour the melted peanut butter and lard over the dry ingredients and mix well, adjusting the ratio to avoid crumbling. Other ingredients such as dried fruit, meal worms, and peanuts can be added. Press the mixture into molds (tuna cans, cookie cutters) and refrigerate. Hang the cakes with twine, in a recycled mesh bag, or in a purchased feeder. Other bird treats include: peanut butter spread on a pinecone and rolled in birdseed or oranges cut in half – be creative!

Make a Cornucopia Table Favor

A cornucopia as a Thanksgiving or harvest centerpiece is a great idea, but here is a smaller version that makes a great table favor. Using sugar ice cream cones, dip the pointed end into hot water for about 20 seconds, then microwave it for about 20 seconds – experiment to see if more time is needed. Gently press the end of the cone around the handle of a wooden spoon to turn the point upward. Allow the cone to dry completely and fill it with small candies and nuts for guests to enjoy.

Clean Up and Put Away Garden Items

By Margaret Lowe, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

It is time to think of proper cleaning and storage of all garden equipment for the winter. A little maintenance and care will extend the life of equipment and make work much easier and efficient.

All the water should be drained from hoses. Hang them on reels or something that will keep kinks from forming. Do not hang them on nails; the weight will pull down on the hose and form kinks which are very difficult to remove.

Remove all soil, mud and vegetation from tools using a wire brush, scraper or strong stream of water. An old grill brush works well for cleaning.

Sharpen hoes, shovels, pruners, loppers, saws, etc. A small round file makes a good tool for sharpening those small tools. Coating metal tools with oil will help to stop rust from forming. Oil springs, pivots and all those joints that require lubrication. Many of us fill a bucket half full of sand, pour oil over the sand and then position hand tools, such as trowels, down into the oily sand to keep them from rusting.

Manufacturers suggest removing gasoline from engines. Also, you may want to unhook the negative cable from batteries in any machinery.

Sprayers should be thoroughly washed and rinsed and turned upside down when storing for winter. This will help to keep dirt, dust and creatures from collecting.

Most importantly, put tools away in their proper place where you can find them. Hunting for or losing a favorite tool can be very frustrating when you need it and cannot find it.

These are a few suggestions for fall clean up and storage. If you find time to do these chores now, you will be so happy with yourself next spring when you are ready to garden and all your equipment is also ready to begin the season!

Comeback: American Chestnut

Contributed by Reta Grewell and Margaret Lowe, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteers

More than one hundred years ago, American chestnut trees (*Castanea dentata*) dominated the deciduous forest canopy - twenty-five percent of the forest in the eastern United States. These hardwood trees grew to 100 feet in height, providing a supply of lumber for multiple uses and nuts to feed humans, livestock, and wildlife. The chestnut trees we see today are usually Chinese and Japanese varieties because our native chestnuts have been decimated. In 1904, blighted chestnut trees were noticed at New York Zoological Park. Within a few years, the fungal disease had spread to several states and most American chestnut trees were infected by 1940. The fungus, to which the American chestnut had no resistance, was traced to imported nursery stock.

Efforts to re-establish an American chestnut that will grow and spread began years ago. Dawes Arboretum near Newark and the Mohican State Forest are centers of ongoing experimentation to develop resistant chestnut trees. Friends of Fort Laurens State Memorial and other groups are also working to return the American chestnut to Fort Laurens near Bolivar (chestnut trees were used in the 1778 construction of the fort) and twenty-five trees were planted in 2006. There is even an Ohio Chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation. The foundation has been working for several generations to once again claim dominance for the American chestnut tree. For years many individuals of the group have been experimenting with plantings of chestnut trees in an effort to breed blight-tolerant trees. Where has the foundation found producing trees for experimenting? Amazingly, pockets of the American chestnut trees do exist. A solitary 90-foot tree growing along Lake Erie, estimated at perhaps one-hundred years old, has survived and is providing hope. A few trees even exist here in Coshocton County. Researchers in New York have created blight-resistant American chestnuts using microbiological techniques involving a wheat gene. Hopefully, with the work of many, the valuable American chestnut tree will once again become a common tree all over the state of Ohio.

It should be noted that chestnut trees are not self-pollinating; there must be at least two trees in the area for nut production. Also keep in mind that horse chestnuts are NOT the same as American chestnuts – if fact, horse chestnuts are toxic and should never be eaten.

Here are some sites for more info: <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/dmp/palette/071223.html>
https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/whats_the_difference_between_horse_chestnuts_and_sweet_chestnuts

“In every gardener there is a child who believes in The Seed Fairy.”

~Robert Brault, rbrault.blogspot.com

November Garden Check List:

- ❖ Cut down perennials after foliage browns.
- ❖ Plant spring bulbs until ground freezes.
- ❖ Inspect euonymus and lilacs for scale.
- ❖ Rake lawn to remove fallen leaves and debris.
- ❖ Remove fallen leaves from beds of ivy, pachysandra, myrtle or euonymus.
- ❖ Drain gas and oil from mower before storing.
- ❖ Prune grape vines.
- ❖ Stay off frozen grass.
- ❖ Make sure hoses are drained, disconnected and stored to prevent winter freezing.
- ❖ Clean and sharpen tools before storage.

MGVs Donate to Christmas Castle Project

Master Gardener Volunteers will donate \$200.00 again this year to a very worthwhile project... the Salvation Army/WTNS Christmas Castle Project. We are glad to “give back” to our community!

December Garden Check List:

- ❖ Set Christmas trees securely in a holder that will hold water and fill daily.
- ❖ Start pansy seeds under grow-lights.
- ❖ Brush heavy snow and ice off trees and shrubs.
- ❖ Prune grape vines
- ❖ Stay off frozen grass.
- ❖ Page through garden catalogues and fill out a wish list.

Christmas Gift Suggestion

A good book can be a valuable resource for any hobbyist and a gardener is no exception. *Garden-
pedia, An A-to- Z Guide to Gardening Terms*, by Pam Bennett and Maria Zampini, is available for \$17.00 at the Coshocton County Extension Office at 724 South 7th Street, Room 110, in Coshocton. It would make a great Christmas gift for your favorite gardener!

Plat books plus books on subjects such as mushrooms and Ohio trees are also available.

Upcoming Events

November 4	Daylight Saving Time ends – turn clocks back!	
November 9	The Real Dirt on WTNS 99.3	9:00 – 10:00 am
November 29	Global Climate Change: How Does It Affect YOU?	7:00 – 8:30 pm
December 14	The Real Dirt on WTNS 99.3	9:00 – 10:00 am



Watch for FREE copies of “Keep It Growing” bi-monthly at: OSU Extension Office, Coshocton Public Library, West Lafayette Library, Sprout Garden Center, Garden Patch Greenhouse, Clary Gardens, Buehler’s, and Warsaw ShopWise. Available FREE via e-mail or the OSU Extension website. Subscribe for home delivery via USPS for \$5.00 per year.

Have a suggestion or question for “Keep It Growing”? Contact Margaret Lowe and Gail Piper, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteers, in care of the Coshocton County Extension Office.

Coshocton County Extension

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