

Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer Newsletter

KEEP IT GROWING!

January - February 2019

Volume 16, Issue 1

Programs to Start the New Year

Our “Beat the Blahs” series has been well-attended over the past few years and is a great way to “scratch” our gardening “itch” 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 continues! Two sessions were held in August and September on preparing a site and on planting cover crops to reduce soil compaction. Two more sessions, “Designing and Selecting Plants for Your Perennial Garden”, 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 To see a flyer for the event, go to: <https://coshocton.osu.edu/sites/coshocton/files/imce/Program/Pages/ANR/Flyer%20for%20Perennial%20Bed.pdf>

Macro photography is the close-up photography of very small subjects in which the size of the subject in the photograph is greater than life size. Thanks to a growing number of beautiful images online of small plants, animals and insects, many photographers today want to know how to take macro pictures. OSU Extension in Coshocton County is pleased to be offering a “Macro-Photography in the Outdoors” workshop on Monday, February 18, 2019 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Coshocton County Services Building in Room 145, located at 724 South 7th Street in Coshocton, Ohio. Learn photography techniques, how to choose the right equipment, and much more with Danae Wolfe, an award winning photographer and OSU Educational Technology Specialist, who will teach the basics of macro photography. Find a registration flyer for this workshop at:

<https://coshocton.osu.edu/sites/coshocton/files/imce/Program/Pages/ANR/Photography%20in%20the%20Outdoors.pdf>

Master Gardener Volunteer Recognition

OSU Extension - Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteers and Interns were recognized for a year of dedication on November 28, 2017 at Raven’s Glenn Winery.

Twelve Coshocton County MGVs and nine interns volunteered over 1050 hours toward beautifying and educating Coshocton County between January 1 and November 27, 2018. They also dedicated over 220 hours to further educate themselves in horticultural practices. In addition, the nine interns who committed to the program in 2018 each completed over 50 hours of class time. Three interns, Jandi Adams, Verda McGraw and Cari Weaver, also completed the required 50 hours of volunteer service to become new Master Gardener Volunteers. They join the eleven currently active MGVs: Coleman and Pam Anderson, Teresa Donley, Marsha Duling, Reta Grewell, Tony Hatem, Margaret Lowe, Dianne McCoy-Adams, Susan McCurdy, Gail Piper, and Betty Williams.

MGV programs and projects in Coshocton County include:

- Displays at the Career Center Open House, Earth Day, First Farm Friday, Coshocton County Fair, and the Fall Foliage and Farm Tour
- Educational sessions such as “Beat the Blahs”, Lunch & Learns, teaching gardens, nature programs, and speaking engagements
- Gardens which include the daylily bed, entrance bed, and phenology garden at Lake Park; and the parking lot garden at the County Services Building
- Annual plant sale, newsletter, and seasonal plant & pest diagnostics

Starting Plants for Our Vegetable Garden

By Verda McGraw, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

My husband and I start a lot of our own plants from seed. We have tables and ordinary shop lights set up in our basement. Seeds are planted in commercial starter mix in cell packs which go into large trays with clear plastic covers. The lights are hung over the trays, two to four inches above the seedlings. We also use heat mats under the trays. We usually order the trays and cell packs online from a greenhouse supply company.

When using the seed starter mix, it is easier to get it moist enough by adding warm water and stirring it in a bucket before filling the cells. Sometimes we re-use the seed starter mix; however, I sterilize it by baking it at 170 degrees for about an hour. When the seedlings are transplanted the heating pad and cover can be taken away; we then water them with a liquid fertilizer solution. We use commercial potting soil for transplants; this also can be re-used but should be sterilized.

As the transplants grow, lights are kept two to four inches above the tops of the plants. Lights are turned off at night, then on in the daytime for at least twelve hours. We now have a small greenhouse with a heater so we can transfer the plants from the basement to the greenhouse. Since April was quite cold last year, it was difficult to regulate the night time temperature.

Last season, some of the tomato transplants became stressed and were dying; everything else was fine. Searching for an answer, I found the problem to be poor drainage in some of the trays. Tomatoes can be a little wet and a little cool, but they do not like cold, wet roots all the time. I dried them and transplanted them, but still had a loss.

We start planting seeds in the basement in January with pansies and petunias first. In March we plant cold crops like broccoli, kale, cabbage and Brussel sprouts. In April, we begin the warm weather crops such as tomatoes and peppers. The sweet potatoes were started in March from some we had stored in the basement from a previous harvest. They were sprouting so we broke the sprouts off and placed them in water until roots grew. These were planted in four-inch pots and kept in the greenhouse.

We enjoy gardening almost every month of the year with lights in the basement and our greenhouse. If you count dreaming over seed catalogs, we garden every month of the year!

Winter Care of Houseplants

By Kirsten Ross, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer Intern

“Houseplant” is a word used to describe a plant that can be kept in your home and enjoyed throughout the year. With thoughtful care, these plants will thrive and bring you enjoyment for many years. However, winter can be a trying time when it comes to caring for plants. Here are a few tips to help keep your green friends healthy.

Watering - winter is a tricky time when it comes to watering houseplants. Many plants go dormant due to less daylight; those plants use water less readily and can be susceptible to root rot. Conversely, our heating systems create an extremely dry atmosphere in the home causing soil moisture to evaporate quickly. Be observant and note the leaves of your plants: are they limp or less firm than usual or are they drooping or dropping off? Is their color waning? Feel the soil: is it dry past the second knuckle of your finger or is the soil pulling away from the sides of the pot? These are all good indicators that your plant needs a drink. Give it a thorough soaking to encourage and support a healthy root system. Water should run out of the drainage holes in the bottom of the pot; let it drain thoroughly and make sure there is no residual water left in the bottom of the pot. Do not water your plants on a fixed schedule; water them based on usage.

Environment - most houseplants are from tropical climates and enjoy humidity. Heating our homes in the winter often strips the air of the moisture these plants rely on. If you notice your leaves are browning at the tips, try misting them frequently. Move plants away from heat sources. If you have a bright window in your bathroom, give them a change of scenery so they can enjoy the humid environment. Use a humidifier or place a tray of pebbles and water underneath some of your humidity-loving plants to give them some extra moisture in the air. Heating systems can also create dust. If you notice a build-up on your plant's leaves, wipe them with a soft cloth and cool water to allow the plant to breathe.

Light - daylight is in short supply during the winter; plants often slow their metabolism which translates to slower or stopped growth. Your plant may become “leggy” as it reaches out to find light; you might want to consider relocating your plants in the winter time. South or west-facing windows are ideal, provided they are clear of any outside obstructions. You may notice that some plants “take off” growing as they receive more light.

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The best advice for plants, regardless of the season, is to observe them! No two plants are alike. The same type of plant in two different rooms will behave in two different ways and have different needs. Through observing and touching our plants, we can determine many of their needs, catch problems early on, and help our plant friends thrive. Good luck and happy gardening!

Annuals, Biennials, and Perennials

By Margaret Lowe, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

We see those terms as we look through seed catalogs and read the plant tags at garden centers – what do they mean? Here is a brief explanation of these categories of herbaceous ornamental plants.

Annuals flower one season and are gone. You may see the terms “hardy”, “half-hardy”, or “tender” in reference to the plants’ tolerance of cold and frost. The most common are the true annuals which grow from seed, flower, and produce their own seed within a year. Annuals come in all colors, textures, and shapes and tend to bloom over long periods. They can be used in mass or mixed plantings, or in containers or hanging baskets. One of the advantages of using annuals is that you can begin all over if you do not like the ones you planted!

Biennials are plants that take two growing seasons to complete their cycle of life. They first set roots, grow leaves, and then go through a dormant period. In the second year they will send up stems, leaves, flowers, become pollinated, go to seed, and die.

Most perennials die back in the winter and come back the following year. They are considered hardy by withstanding cold weather, although some tender perennials may be killed by frost or have the foliage above ground damaged. Perennials tend to have a short flowering season, but many have interesting foliage in many colors that are longer lasting. There are more varieties of perennial plants available than any other type of plant.

The table below lists some well-known flowers in each category:

Annuals	Biennials	Perennials
Zinnia	Hollyhock	Allium
Impatiens	Foxglove	Aster
Nicotiana	Money plant	Chrysanthemum
Petunia	Canterbury bells	Sedum
Salvia		Clematis
Viola		Cosmos

Find more info at: <https://my.extension.illinois.edu/documents/1919092110091009/SampleAnnuals&Peren.pdf>

Word Search for Flowers

<p>W R M U D D R K X Y D L W R P P I L U T C A S T E R I Q E O A I L H A D R I K H C L C W P Y I C N P N Q D S J F A P O P J N N R H T G X V Y G C B L Y P A O U P P P A C Y V M H F T T O K E T B F C I O L R R N Y Y S N A P E V S N M S I N U H P G P N O M P I W N I M L S O Z M N G C O A R E I T X O S S A A M Y L E Q I U B A Z M S T R Q N T C L Q J V Z M M T B A K F D T Z C R B Q I E U R F M I Z W U Z O R O S E L M G Z T X Q B X C S U C O A C C Y Y T</p>	<p>ASTER PETUNIA CANNA POPPY CLEMATIS ROSE CLEOME SUNFLOWER CLIVIA TULIP COSMOS DAHLIA DAISY HOSTA IRIS LILAC LILY MUM PANSY PEONY</p>
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January Garden Check List:

- Order seeds!
- Sow seeds of warm-season annuals and cool-weather vegetables
- Cut back on feeding houseplants (do not feed dormant houseplants)
- Check house plants for mites, mealy bugs, and scale
- Plan flower and vegetable beds for spring
- Brush heavy snow from evergreens with a broom
- Take cuttings of your African violets
- Winter damaged tree and shrub branches should be pruned as soon as possible
- Cut branches of pussy willow and forsythia to bring indoors for forcing
- Curl up with a good gardening book or catalog



February Garden Check List:

- Sow seeds of warm-season annuals
- Sow seeds for hardy spring-blooming plants
- Over-wintering egg cases of bag worms should be removed from trees and shrubs
- Parsley and other herb seeds can be sown indoors, for use in the kitchen
- Seed of both annual and perennial Canterbury bells can be started indoors
- Sow celery, cabbage and onion seed indoors now for an early crop
- Spray house ferns every other day
- Towards the end of the month, sweet pea seed can be sown in a cool house
- Transplant begonia and coleus seedlings when their second pair of true leaves appear
- Ventilate your cold frames on any warm sunny days
- Prune winter damaged tree and shrub branches as soon as possible

Upcoming Events

January 11	The Real Dirt on WTNS 99.3	9:00 – 10:00 am
January 16	Create a Perennial Bed series	5:30 – 7:00 pm
February 6	Create a Perennial Bed series	5:30 – 7:00 pm
February 8	The Real Dirt on WTNS 99.3	9:00 – 10:00 am
February 18	Macro Photography in the Outdoors	6:00 – 8:00 pm
To Be Announced	Beat the Blahs	



Watch for **FREE** copies of “Keep It Growing” bi-monthly at: OSU Extension Office, Coshocton Public Library, West Lafayette Library, Sprout Garden Center (in season), Garden Patch Greenhouse (in season), 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

724 South 7th Street, Room 110, Coshocton, OH 43812

Phone: (740) 622-2265

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