

Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer Newsletter**KEEP IT GROWING!**

January - February 2020

Volume 17, Issue 1

Ask MGVs on WTNS

Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteers are pleased to present “The Real Dirt” on WTNS (FM 99.3) and <https://mywtnsradio.com/> on the second Friday of the month at 9:00 am! Tune in to hear gardening tips and ask questions of our local MGVs. A huge “thank you” to WTNS for hosting us!

2020 Programming

We are currently planning our 2020 programs - watch for announcements for educational events! If you have a suggestion for a topic, please let us know at the Extension Office! Call (740) 622-2265 or e-mail David Marrison at marrison.2@osu.edu

Training Class for New Master Gardener Volunteers Announced

Do you enjoy gardening? Are you looking for a way to give back to your community? Then becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer may be just the thing for you.

The Master Gardener Volunteer Program trains volunteers for Ohio State University Extension in Coshocton County to help further the mission of engagement and outreach. Volunteers are trained in consumer horticulture topics, including annuals, perennials, fruits, vegetables, soil, botany, turf, insects, diseases and more! After receiving over 50 hours of education, each intern must complete 50 hours of service to OSU to become a fully certified Ohio State Master Gardener Volunteer.

Training classes in Coshocton County will be held on Monday evenings from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Coshocton County Extension office at 724 South 7th Street in Coshocton, Ohio. Training will start on February 10, 2020 and end June 8. An application packet can be found online at <https://coshocton.osu.edu/> and is due January 8. The cost for this training program is a \$135 course fee. More details can also be obtained by contacting David Marrison at 740-622-2265 or marrison.2@osu.edu

Coshocton County Master Gardeners Recognized

The Coshocton County OSU Extension Master Gardener Volunteers celebrated their successes in 2019 at their annual recognition dinner on November 13 at Raven's Glenn Winery. The Coshocton County MGV program was started in 2001 to help OSU Extension answer horticultural questions from county residents. There are currently 16 active Master Gardener Volunteers.

Several members were recognized for achieving milestones in volunteer hours. Congratulations to the following MGVs: 50 Hours - Bob Bigrigg, Brenda Bush, Kirsten Ross, & Taylor Silknitter; 100 Hours - Jandi Adams, Dallas Lonsinger & Cari Weaver; 300 Hours - Dianne McCoy Adams; 600 Hours - Tony Hatem; 800 Hours - Teresa Donley & Marsha Duling; 1,100 Hours - Reta Grewell; 1,200 Hours - Betty Williams; 1,500 Hours - Margaret Lowe; 1,600 Hours - Susan McCurdy; and 2,100 Hours - Gail Piper.

Jandi Adams and Cari Weaver were re-elected to their office positions as Group Facilitator and Secretary-Treasurer for 2020.

During the dinner, Gail Piper was recognized as one of Ohio's five “Outstanding Master Gardener Volunteers of the Year”; that honor was presented at the state recognition conference on November 8. The county group was also recognized for winning the 2019 OSU Extension Outstanding Master Gardener Volunteer Project for small groups (1 – 25 members) for the information station that was erected in the phenology area at Lake Park.

The Coshocton County MGVs have combined to volunteer nearly 1,100 hours through November of 2019 and

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almost 23,000 hours since 2001. The organization *Independent Sector* values volunteer service to be worth \$25.43 per hour. At this rate, Coshocton County MGVs have provided almost \$27,000 worth of service this year and more than \$550,000 over the history of the program. Thank you to our volunteers for their dedication to our county and congratulations to all of the Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteers for a very successful year of outreach and education in 2019.

Herbal Teas

Reta Grewell, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer, contributed to this article

Any part of an edible herb - flowers, stems with leaves, seeds, berries, roots and bark - can be used to make herbal tea (sometimes called “tisane”). There are two ways to make herbal tea.

1. Infusion - boiling water is poured over the plant material in a tea pot and steeped. Infusion, by definition, is the steeping or soaking in water of a substance to extract its properties.
2. Decoction - plant material, such as leaves, are boiled in water. After a few minutes of steeping, the leaves are then strained from the tea. This method produces a stronger flavor.

There are many herbs that lend themselves to making tea. They can be grown in the garden or in containers, but most need full sun and well-drained soils. Some herbs are annual; others are perennial. Research the growing habits of the plants you choose – for example, most mints are very aggressive growers and can take over a planting bed. Be aware that pesticides should NOT be applied to herbs that will be consumed.

A few suggested herbal combinations for tea are listed here:

- Apple mint, spearmint and orange mint
- Basil, lemon balm and cloves
- Catnip, chamomile, marjoram and spearmint
- Chamomile, lemon verbena, spearmint and rose petals
- Rosemary, lemon grass and thyme

More info can be found at: <https://pss.uvm.edu/ppp/articles/teatime.htm>

Plant Milkweed Seeds Now to Attract Pollinators

By Gail Piper, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

Would you like to see more butterflies or pollinators in your garden this summer? That may sound a little strange as you see snow flying outside, but now is the time to think about how to attract them! There are many specific plants that are hosts for specific species. For example, monarch butterfly larvae only consume varieties of milkweed plants. Also, the nectar of milkweed blooms attracts a great variety of pollinators.

Milkweed seeds can be planted now – in fact, they need to go through winter-like conditions in order to germinate. Even if the ground is frozen, the seeds can be planted in containers and left outside. If planting common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) seeds in the ground, be sure to place them in an area where they can spread because their numbers will increase every year. It is also a good idea to plant them away from nearby cropland because they can be so prolific. Be sure to mark the location so the seedlings aren't accidentally pulled!

There are several varieties of milkweeds – in fact about twelve are native to Ohio. Butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) is a very pretty plant with a yellow to orange blooms that attract butterflies and other pollinators; it only grows about 2 feet in height. Swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*) is tall with a pretty pink bloom and does well in damp areas. All three of these varieties have been successful in our Master Gardener Volunteers' phenology area at Lake Park. In fact, MGVs have been collecting seeds to share from these plants. Common milkweed and butterfly weed seeds are available at the Coshocton County Extension Office and the Coshocton County Soil and Water Conservation District Office in the County Services Building on 7th Street. Stop by for some seeds and start your own plants to encourage pollinators to your garden!

More information can be found at: <https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/ENT-47> and at:

<https://blogs.extension.iastate.edu/answerline/2018/09/24/collecting-and-fall-planting-milkweed-for-monarchs/>

According to a report from WOSU, the Ohio Department of Transportation's Pollinator Habitat Program that was launched in 2011 has helped to increase monarch and honeybee populations (milkweed, sunflowers and Ohio spiderworts are some of the plants used). It has also cut maintenance costs because the plantings replace areas that needed regular mowing. There is a habitat planting in Coshocton County at the intersection of US 36 and SR 93, part of the 800 acres that has been planted in 45 counties; the plan is to add 125 acres every year.

Keeping Your Green Thumb (and Houseplants!) Green

Are you wondering why your once beautiful house plants (the ones you brought indoors in October) are now beginning to lose their leaves and do not look nearly as nice as they once did? Perhaps you are loving them to death. Two surefire ways to kill a plant are over-watering and over-fertilizing. These will kill a plant faster than anything.

Many of us, when watering our plants, water every plant in the house just because we are watering. Unless your house is extremely dry in the winter your plants will not require as much water as you may think. Pushing your finger into the soil is still the best method for checking for a need of water.

Most houseplants generally do not need fertilizer during the winter because most are dormant due to less light and lower temperatures. Over-fertilizing your plants may cause some plants to respond poorly and others to grow in a straggly manner. In watering and fertilizing your indoor plants, remember “less is best”!

Find more houseplant information at: <https://extension2.missouri.edu/g6510>

Triskaidekaphobia and Paraskevidekatriaphobia

By Margaret Lowe, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

There are many phobias and two of the lesser-known ones are named in the title above. The first one, triskaidekaphobia, is a fear of the number 13. The second phobia, paraskevidekatriaphobia, is a fear of Friday the 13th. My dictionary describes phobia as an exaggerated, usually inexplicable and illogical fear of a particular object or class of objects. This year, 2020, has two Friday the thirteenths, one in March and one in November. No year is without a Friday the 13th and no year has more than three. Any month that begins on a Sunday has a Friday the 13th.

There are fears of just about everything and there are also people who have fears of many things. I am not very fond of heights and this phobia is acrophobia. There are weather phobias, even a fear of sunshine called heliophobia. It would be very difficult to live with such a phobia as this.

If you garden in any way you might want to learn of some garden phobias. Here are a few:

vegetables – lachanophobia	birds – ornithophobia
flowers – anthophobia	toads – bufonophobia
plants - botanophobia	insects – entomophobia
trees – dendrophobia	garlic – alliumphobia

Ironically, Hippopotomonstrosesquippedaliophobia is a fear of long words...

Winter Weather Cautions

Our winter weather has been fairly mild so far, but it's a good idea to plan for whatever Mother Nature throws at us this season. Here are some things to keep in mind to prevent winter damage to your plants.

Heavy snow and ice on trees and shrubs can break branches. When possible, brush the accumulation off with a broom and avoid shaking the branches too much. Ice is often best left to melt naturally. Damaged limbs should be pruned as soon as the weather permits.

Use caution with de-icers! While we certainly want to promote safety from ice on our driveways, roads, or sidewalks, nearby plants can be affected by the products we use. Run-off from these areas also impacts our waterways. Use these products as sparingly as possible. While rock salt is inexpensive, there are alternatives that are less harmful. In some cases, sand or kitty litter may provide traction.

More info on de-icers can be found at: <https://extension.psu.edu/de-icers-and-plant-health>

Tribute to Bessie Infield

Over the years our Master Gardener Volunteer group has helped, talked with, and met many fantastic, friendly individuals. One of those individuals telephoned Mike Bechtol on the WTNS Communication Line talk show regarding a discussion about trees - American chestnut trees in particular. Not wanting to be on the radio herself, she asked Mike to put her in contact with an MGV she had heard discussing trees on the radio.

After the program, Mike made the contact and the result was a meeting which developed into a beautiful friendship. All involved enjoyed visiting and learning more about bees, bats and American chestnut trees.

Now, because of a tragic accident, the caller is deceased. We would like to say how sorry we are to lose this individual, Bessie Infield. Our condolences to the family and thank you, Mrs. Infield, for being part of our lives.

~Margaret and Gail

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

“Don’t think the garden loses its ecstasy in winter. It’s quiet, but the roots are down there, riotous.” ~Rumi

Upcoming Events

January 8	MGV 2020 Training Class Applications due	
January 10	The Real Dirt on WTNS 99.3	9:00 – 10:00 am
February 14	The Real Dirt on WTNS 99.3	9:00 – 10:00 am

Watch for more programming announcements!



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, Auer Ace Hardware, Tractor Supply, Clary Gardens, Buehler’s, and Warsaw ShopWise. Available FREE via e-mail or the OSU-Coshocton County Extension website <https://coshocton.osu.edu/>. 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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