

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

July - August 2020

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Moving Forward

As you know, OSU Extension face-to-face programs including Master Gardener Volunteer events were cancelled in March; that policy continues as we move into July and August. Our MGV diagnostic clinic is on hold and First Farm Friday has been cancelled.

The OSU – Coshocton Extension Office is currently in the process of physically reopening! Unless something changes, some employees (who have all been working from home since March) will start to work on-site on July 10. Limited staff will be available on any particular day, so it is a good idea to call ahead if you would like to speak with a specific person. In the interest of protecting staff and clientele, there will be some changes in protocol:

- Hand sanitizer (provided) and face coverings (can be provided) are required before entering the office
- The first hour of each day (8:00 to 9:00 am) will be for immunocompromised clients only
- Only one person or family is allowed in the office at one time
- Please ring the doorbell and wait to enter
- There will be separate doors for entering and exiting the office
- Other criteria will be posted on the office door.

Questions can be addressed by calling (740) 622-2265; e-mail addresses for each staff member can be found on the OSU-Coshocton County website at:
<https://coshocton.osu.edu/about/staff>

Gardening Info Online

A great amount of gardening information is available online. For example, Buckeye Yard and Garden onLine has weekly alerts and horticultural information. Subscribe to BGYL here: <https://bygl.osu.edu/> Ohio State has another site for information at <https://ohioline.osu.edu/> Our local MGVs have a Facebook page, “Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteers”, where one can find pertinent posts. Another way to find reliable info is to use a search engine such as Google, Bing, or others. Type a topic into the search bar and add the words “university extension”.

Our state Master Gardeners have also had several webinars via Zoom over the last few months. Those sessions have been recorded and are available to the public by going to this website:
<https://mastergardener.osu.edu/news/mgvs-horticulture-lunch-and-learn-and-happy-hour-information-and-registration>

**Patriotic Colors in Bloom!**

Independence Day has us thinking red, white, and blue! Margaret Lowe, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer, highlights three plants that emphasize the season.

For some other seasonal color suggestions, go to: <https://pss.uvm.edu/ppp/articles/4thfls.htm>

Blue: Bluebells

Bluebells (*Campanula spp.*) grow in moist, rich bottomlands, sometimes in large colorful masses. The blue flowers hang downward and grow on slender, strong stems that hold up well to wind. Stems grow from one to two feet high with large floppy leaves. The flower often has a pinkish color on opening, later becoming blue. There are about three hundred species of *Campanula* which are known by these common names: bluebell, bellflower, Canterbury bell and campanula.

The most common is the “Bluebell of Scotland” (*Campanula rotundifolia*). It grows in meadows on mountain slopes in many parts of Europe, Asia and North America. The plants grow year after year in shaded, moist areas and bloom from June to September. Another species, Canterbury bells (*Campanula medium*), is a favorite in gardens; this biennial may be blue, purple, pink or white. Creeping bellflower (*Campanula rapunculoides* L.) has heart-shaped leaves and, as the name implies, can be aggressive.

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Locally, we often see a different native plant commonly known as “bluebells” – Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*) bloom in early spring. These flowers also start with a pinkish cast and then turn blue. They are often found in shaded areas in woods or flood plains and grow to a height of 18 to 24 inches. Virginia bluebells provide nutrition for early pollinators and go dormant in mid-summer.

For more information on these plants, go online to: <https://pss.uvm.edu/ppp/articles/bellflowers.html> or <https://extension.illinois.edu/blogs/garden-scoop/2020-05-02-virginia-bluebells>

Red: Red Hot Poker (*Kniphofia uvaria*)

This very distinctive plant, a native of South Africa, looks just like the name - a very hot poker that has been left in a fire for some time. The plant, sometimes called “torch lily”, is one of about 70 species of *Kniphofia* (which is pronounced “nee-FOF-ee-a”).

The plant forms a thick clump of narrow foliage; the stem grows out of the clump and may reach as much as five feet tall with a dense spike of flowers that looks something like a bottle brush. Most of these plants bloom in summer and can last into autumn, depending on the species.

The flower head may become heavy, causing it to fall over. Because of this, red hot poker should be planted in deep, well-drained soil. The plants grow from thick rhizomes that do not tolerate heavy wet soils very well. They prefer the sun but can also tolerate some shade. To keep the plant neat-looking, the flower stalk should be cut to the ground after the bloom fades.

The rhizomes can be left in the ground during winter; however, a wet fall followed by a very cold winter can kill these plants. Although this perennial grows in zones 5 through 9, leaves and mulch should be used as winter protection in zones 5 and 6 or you may want to dig and store them as you would other rhizomes and bulbs.

For more info: <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=i310>

White: Queen Anne’s Lace

Queen Anne’s lace (*Daucus carota*), also known as wild carrot, is a member of the Apiaceae family which includes carrots and parsley. Native to Europe and Asia, the plant has spread across most of North America. (The vegetable carrot that we eat also has a European and Asiatic origin). Queen Anne’s lace is considered a weed (it grows wherever it wishes) and is classified as “invasive” in many areas; in fact, it has been placed on Ohio’s Noxious Weed list and should not be propagated. Despite that, it is an attractive plant and many do not mind it growing in fields or along fence lines or roadsides. CAUTION: do not confuse Queen Anne’s lace with poison hemlock which has purple blotches on the stem!

Queen Anne’s lace grows as high as three feet. The leaves have a carrot-like smell when crushed or rubbed together. The long taproot resembles a carrot, but you would be wise to buy your carrots at a grocery. The name “Queen Anne’s lace” was given the plants because of their lacy clusters of small white flowers with a very tiny, single, dark red or purple flower at the center. The bloom grows to an umbrella shape, sometimes as large as a small saucer; the center is so small that you will need to look very closely to see it.

Here is an interesting and educational experiment to do with this plant, especially with children: Pick several blooms with long stems and place them in vases of water to which different colors of food coloring have been added. Use several drops of coloring so that the water is definitely dark in color. Watch and keep track of time to see how long it takes for the flower head to change from white to the color of the water.

For more info, go to: <https://extension.psu.edu/wild-carrot-or-queen-annes-lace>

Growing Firecrackers

By Gail Piper, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

July 4th makes us think of fireworks – so let’s talk about firecrackers that grow!

Firecracker plant (*Cuphea ignea* – pronounced KYOO-fee-uh), also called cigar flower, is native to Mexico and Jamaica and grows in zones 10 through 12. The plant has reddish-orange blooms that are tubular in shape and have a pistil extending from the end resembling the fuse of a firecracker. It can be grown here as an annual, a houseplant, or in a container that can be moved inside for the winter. This plant attracts hummingbirds, butterflies and bees when outside in the summer.

Firecracker shrub or bush (*Hamelia patens*) is also hardy in warmer zones (9 and 10); therefore it should be treated as an annual, houseplant, or container plant in our area. The blooms are tubular and range in color from orange to red. This shrub can reach 3 feet in height, requires lots of sun, enjoys hot temperatures, and regular moisture in well-drained soil.

Margaret Lowe has some info that fits this year's MGV theme "Good Bugs, Bad Bugs"

Good Bug: Lady Bug

Equipped with razor-sharp jaws that slice and squeeze their insect food, lady bugs are miniature eating machines. An adult can eat upward of a thousand aphids in a single day. Many feed on mold, fungus, pollen, scale insects and mealybugs.

Lady bugs really are beetles. They live two years and survive the winter in their adult form, hiding under rocks and downed timber. Emerging in early spring, the adult lays clusters of about fifty eggs at a time. The eggs incubate less than five days and the emerging larva feed for 2 to 3 weeks before pupating. Adults emerge in a week to ten days; five to six generations can be produced each year.

This orange and black or red and black insect conveys a message in nature that they are toxic. When disturbed or picked up by a bird they emit toxins that repulse predators. Most are beneficial to plants - gardeners want these insects in their gardens and some catalogs even have them listed for purchase. They are probably the best known and most valued of our beetles. In 1975 the lady beetle was chosen as the official state insect of Ohio.

Lady beetles number more than four-hundred fifty species throughout North America. Along with their red, orange and black colors many have various numbers of spots - two, seven, nine, thirteen and twenty. There is also a striped lady beetle, a pink lady beetle, a twice-stabbed lady beetle which is black with two red spots, an orange-spotted lady beetle, and a cream-spotted lady beetle. And then, there is the introduced, non-native Asian lady beetle that eats soybean aphids but is considered a nuisance by homeowners.

Find more lady beetle info at: <https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/ENT-45>

Bad Bug: Roach

Roaches are known by several names including water bugs, Palmetto bugs and cockroaches. They are bugs of the night, searching for water and food. They will take up residence almost anywhere. They do not mind living outside but, given a chance, they will move inside your home and bring the whole family with them.

Cockroaches can be found all over the world and are going strong. There are over 3,800 species of roaches worldwide and they have been around for 360 million years. Americans spend much money annually trying to get rid of cockroaches, but to no avail. In fact, roaches are now becoming resistant to many pesticides and chemicals. Roaches can identify poisons with their sensory hairs and will avoid areas laced with poison.

The most common roaches found in the United States are:

- American cockroach – including the Palmetto bug; reddish brown; about one and one-half inches long; has wings but rarely flies. Will eat anything but is most often found in commercial food areas.
- Smoky brown cockroach – is over one inch long; dark brown in color; and winged. Usually found outdoors and in greenhouses.
- Oriental cockroach – is sometimes called a water bug; black in color; has wings but is unable to fly. Usually found around garbage cans and is the filthiest of all cockroaches. Moves inside buildings when the weather turns cold.
- German cockroach – the most commonly found roach, it produces more eggs in more cycles per year than other roaches. Prefers apartments, restaurants and motels. This roach eats anything and can be identified by the two brown stripes behind the head.
- Brown banded cockroach - light brown and usually found in warm areas such as around appliances. About ½ long, they have two light bands along their wings. It prefers starches but will eat anything.
- Woods roach - light brown in color; can usually be found under a log or in a woodpile outdoors.

For more info: <https://extension.umd.edu/hgic/topics/cockroaches> or

<https://extension.umn.edu/insects-infest-homes/cockroaches#oriental-cockroach-137712>

Thankful for Friends, Past and Present

Master Gardener Volunteers are thankful to have had many friends in the community over the years and some have even been recognized on the state level! One of our friends, Joe Kreitzer, gathered milkweed seeds last fall and helped to distribute them to the public. Many thanks, Joe – your support is greatly appreciated!

We are sad to report that another friend, Karen O'Dell, passed away in May. For several years Karen donated plants for our annual plant sale, was a frequent visitor to the Extension Office, and often called WTNS with questions when MGVs were on the air. She will be missed.

July Garden Check List:

- Start dividing tall bearded iris.
- Shear evergreen shrubs now.
- Raise the lawnmower to at least three inches during hot weather.
- Keep deadheading annuals and perennials to continue their length of bloom.
- Fertilize annuals with an all-purpose fertilizer to help them bloom.
- Water, water, water when needed
- Move the hammock under the shade tree...
- Pinch terminal shoots on mums to encourage branching.
- Harvest vegetables when ripe; rotting attracts insects.
- Harvest lavender stems for use in bath sachets or drying.
- Sprinkle compost starter to speed up composting for fall soil building.

August Garden Check List:

- Take time to enjoy the beauty of your garden.
- Sow seeds of fall vegetables and annuals.
- Prune summer-blooming shrubs after flowers finish.
- Start planning and ordering spring-blooming bulbs.
- Plant garlic now for spring harvests.
- Sow leaf lettuce, spinach, peas and radishes for a late crop.
- Consider getting your soil tested in lawns, vegetable, and flower gardens.
- Take advantage of perennials on sale at your local nursery!

It is wonderful to have fresh, seasonal produce! Whether harvesting from your own garden or buying produce at your local grocer, take care to wash veggies and fruit to remove residual pesticides or animal contamination before consuming.

“WHEN THE WORLD WEARIES, AND SOCIETY CEASES TO SATISFY, THERE IS ALWAYS THE GARDEN” ~ MINNIE AUMONIER

Upcoming Events

July 4	Independence Day	
July 10	The Real Dirt on WTNS 99.3	9:00 – 10:00 am
August 7	First Farm Friday - CANCELLED	
August 14	The Real Dirt on WTNS 99.3	9:00 – 10:00 am

The MGVI Diagnostic Clinic at the Extension Office is still on hold due to Covid 19



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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