

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

July – August 2022

Volume 19, Issue 4

MGVs on WTNS, FM 99.3

Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteers continue to present “The Real Dirt” on WTNS radio (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 discussions on July 8 and August 12. Miss the show? Check the website above for a recording! A huge “thank you” to WTNS!

Extension Office Hours

The Coshocton County-OSU Extension Office at 724 South 7th Street, Room 110, is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to noon and 1:00 to 5:00 pm. Please call the office at 740-622-2265 for more information. In addition, e-mail addresses for each staff member can be found on the OSU-Coshocton County website at: <https://coshocton.osu.edu/about/staff>

Spotted Lanternfly Update

The watch continues across Ohio for any evidence of the spotted lanternfly (SLF). There was an egg hatch reported this spring in Amherst, OH (Lorain County). Previous sightings of SLF evidence have occurred in Cuyahoga and Jefferson counties. Below is a link to a video that explains the habits and life stages of the SLF as well as how to report any findings: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xqU30tXGWGQ&t=518s>

**Interested in becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer?
Contact the Extension Office at (740) 622-2265!**

Collecting Rain

By Margaret Lowe, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

Collecting rain is an old concept that is relatively easy to do and is an inexpensive asset for gardeners. Easy to install, a rain barrel offers a money-saving plan to catch, store and distribute water. The great thing about this project is you can do it yourself and it requires only a barrel, plastic garbage can or some other container to hold the water.

Naturally, it is best to place your barrel or container as close as possible to where the water is to be used. The corner of a garage or shed can be a good place. Trim back or separate the down spout and direct it into the barrel. You may even have a drip somewhere that just requires placing a container under it - even a bucket will do. A dark-colored barrel will help block algae growth, especially if you do not use a lot of water and it sits for a long period of time. Also, keep a lid on the container for safety purposes and to deter mosquito-breeding or creature use.

Why should we collect rainwater? First, it is free... free water that you can save to use in the garden, yard, and flower beds; to water trees; to wash the car; or many other reasons you might use water. Collecting rainwater helps prevent run-off which eventually reaches our streams where it deposits any debris or pollution it has picked up along the way. Rainwater is a moderate temperature and your plants will enjoy it more than the cold shock from the hose. Also, there are no chemicals in it such as chlorine or salt from a softener. Do remember that water collected in this manner should not be used for drinking.

More information can be found here: <https://extension.psu.edu/rain-barrels-in-the-home-garden> and <https://extension.wvu.edu/lawn-gardening-pests/gardening/gardening-101/conserving-water-with-rain-barrels>

Time to Harvest Last Fall's Garlic

By Brenda Junkin, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer



You just can't beat the smell of garlic and butter sauteing in a skillet... if you agree then hopefully you already planted some garlic last September. Now is the time to start enjoying it.

There are three types of garlic; softneck, hardneck and elephant. There are tons of sub-varieties in each type, each with its own flavor difference.

- Softneck garlic produces a bunch of small cloves on each head. The stems are soft and can be braided before they are stored.
- Hardneck produces big cloves that are easy to peel. This is the garlic that produces a scape.
- Elephant is more like a leek with really large cloves and has a mild taste.

Now is the time to remove the hardneck garlic scapes, the long swan-like necks that grow in the middle of each wonderful garlic plant. This garlic scape makes the best homemade garlic pesto. Just make sure you taste the scape first as sometimes they are really potent. When you cut the scape off the plant, you're letting all the energy go to the bulb which will increase the bulb size.

You'll know when your garlic is ready to dig up when the bottoms of the long leaves start to brown. This can occur anywhere from the end of June onward. Never pull your garlic; it can break and damage the bulb. Use a shovel or fork to gently lift it from the soil. Shake off the excess soil, then let the bulbs sit on the ground for a few days to dry. If there is rain in the forecast simply place them on a baking rack in the garage for a few days.

Garlic can be cured to last up to 6 months or so. Simply place the bulbs on a screen or baking rack to dry and store them in a cool area, out of the sun with low humidity for a few weeks. Never put your garlic or any vegetable in a plastic bag; net bags or open containers work the best.

More info on growing garlic can be found at: <https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/hyq-1627>

Tillandsias - Air Plants

By Margaret Lowe, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

Tillandsias are air plants in the Bromeliad family that require no soil; they collect water and nutrients through their leaves. They come in a variety of colors and sizes. The appeal of these plants lies in their form - some have leaves that curl while some have long, straight leaves; some are small, soft, and fuzzy, and range from dwarf to giant in size. The two kinds of tillandsias can be divided by leaf color, either green or silver/gray.

Air plants are native to South and Central America. Their natural habitat varies from alpine to rainforests. The plants have roots that help them to attach to rocks, trees or wherever they wish. They have stems that produce flowers; some stems are long, others divide into several stems, and some are short. Flowers come in various colors and some have scents.

Air plants require gentle sunlight, ventilation and water – water is most important. They should be misted a few times a week or they can be soaked in water; however, they should not be sprayed with direct faucet sprayers because of damage to the organs on the leaves.

A terrarium is the perfect place for air plants because some humidity would remain inside. However, they can be placed almost anywhere. An air plant would like living in the bathroom to soak up water vapor. Arrange them in a tray of sand or place them in a bowl of marbles or rocks. Be creative and change arrangements often. Some people use wire to hang air plants but be aware that rust and copper metal may be toxic to the plants.

Tillandsias bloom only once during the life cycle; however, the blooms remain for weeks. Once the bloom wilts it should be cut off to encourage the growth of new plants. These are called “pups” and should be removed once the pup grows about one-third the size of the mother plant.

A beautiful book that can be checked out of the Coshocton Public Library is “Living with Air Plants” by Yoshihau Kashima. It contains beautiful photos and lots of ideas for adding these plants to your home.

More information can be found here: <https://extension.psu.edu/tillandsia-air-plants>

“Flowers always make people better, happier, and more helpful; they are sunshine, food and medicine for the soul” – Luther Burbank



Shedding Some Light on Lightning Bugs

By Gail Piper, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

For many of us, seeing the little flashing lights of fireflies floating above the grass conjures up memories of our childhood – memories of chasing “lightning bugs” or fireflies after dark, catching them with our hands, and keeping them in a jar beside our bed. Fireflies are indeed fascinating creatures and a symbol of summer for many people. They are neither bugs nor flies, but beetles in the Lampyridae family.

Although there are around 2000 species of fireflies around the globe, we only have a couple of dozen in Ohio. The species most commonly seen here is the eastern firefly, also known as the big dipper firefly. The flash that we see is caused by 3 chemicals, adenosine triphosphate (ATP), luciferin and luciferase, which together with magnesium and oxygen produce a cold light. That flashing light is really a mating signal and varies in pattern by species. The adult fireflies only live a few weeks and their main purpose is to mate and lay eggs. After two or three weeks, the eggs hatch into larvae which burrow into the ground. The larvae then feast on slugs, worms, and other soft-bodied critters until they pupate and become adults many months later.

There seems to be a decline in the number of fireflies – loss of habitat, pesticides, and light pollution are the likely culprits. What can we do to help? Maintain some areas of tall grass, restrict use of pesticides, and reduce outdoor lighting while the adult fireflies are present.

For more info: <https://extension.illinois.edu/blogs/good-growing/2022-06-09-sparks-night-fireflies-and-tips-conserving-them>

Here is a link to an informational video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oadg-r1Ezdk>

What and Why Questionnaire - My Favorite Bug

We asked the Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteers to tell us what their favorite bug is and received the following response. What is your favorite bug?

1. Praying mantis, as I have a few each year around the house in shrubs.
2. I love caterpillars, native bees and moths. Parasitic wasps are pretty cool.
3. 17-year cicada, periodical, most fun.
4. Ladybug, cute and harmless.
5. Dragonflies, because I think that they are interesting. They seem to appear after funerals.
6. Butterflies, love the beauty of the colors they bring and watching my granddaughter run after them.
7. Praying mantis, it is so odd shaped. I can pick them up and they form the large egg case which we can watch or bring close to the house for hatching.
8. Swallowtail butterflies, all types, so pretty and graceful plus they can be pollinators. Also, hummingbird moths, fascinating to watch.
9. Ha, none, ladybugs as they eat other bugs.
10. Hummingbird moth, I think they are remarkable.
11. I don't know if a worm is a bug, but I like them, sign of good soil.

Hanging Baskets

By Gail Piper, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

Did you receive a hanging basket of flowers for Mother's Day? Or perhaps you couldn't resist one of those pretty creations this spring? Now that summer is here, how is it faring? Hanging baskets require some extra care.

- Check the moisture requirements – baskets dry out quickly, especially those that are lined with moss or coconut fiber. Water can be repelled by soil that is too dry; soak the basket in a tub of water to saturate.
- Make sure the basket has the right amount of sunlight; some plants suffer from heat or need shade.
- Fertilize! Even baskets that contain a slow-release fertilizer may benefit from additional nutrients. Use a fertilizer with a 1:2:1 ratio to produce more blossoms.
- Some plants need to be deadheaded to make room for more blooms. Spindly or “leggy” growth may be helped by giving the plants a trim to encourage them to “bush” out.
- Monitor the basket for pests such as Japanese beetles or aphids.
- Repotting the basket into a larger container later in the season may encourage more growth and blooms.

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 plus vegetable and flower gardens.
- Take advantage of perennials on sale at your local nursery!

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.



Upcoming Events

July 4	Happy Independence Day!! (Extension Office closed)	
July 8	The Real Dirt on WTNS 99.3	9:00 – 10:00 am
July 27 - August 7	Ohio State Fair	
August 5	First Farm Friday	5:00 – 7:30 pm
August 12	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, 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/>

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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