

Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer Newsletter

KEEP IT GROWING!

March - April 2020

Volume 17, Issue 2

2020 Programming

Master Gardener Volunteers plan to be at several venues this spring! One of our MGVs will give a presentation at the **Tiverton Institute on Thursday, March 5**. Dr. Risa Pesapane from OSU will speak on the subject of ticks the same day.

On Monday, **March 23**, OSU Extension will host a **Backyard Fruit Production Workshop** at the County Services Building on South 7th Street. Sabrina Schirtzinger, OSU Extension Educator in Knox County, will speak. The program is limited to 30 participants and registration is required; the fee is \$10.00.

MGVs will have displays at the **Coshocton County Career Center Open House on April 7** and **Earth Day on April 18** (also at the Career Center).

If you have a suggestion for a program, please let us know at the Extension Office! Call (740) 622-2265 or e-mail David Marrison at marrison.2@osu.edu

Our Theme for 2020...

The Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteers will be following a **theme of "Good Bugs, Bad Bugs"** this year! We will present information on all kinds of bugs – both beneficial and nuisance – at many of our programs. (Speaking of bugs – some non-native beetles are named for other creatures like the rhinoceros, elephant, giraffe, and more – and are quite fascinating!)

...and there is more!

Applications are still being accepted for a future MGV training class. Visit <https://coshocton.osu.edu/> for information or call the Coshocton County Extension Office at (740) 622-2265.

MGVs will once again be on hand for a **Diagnostic Clinic** at the Extension Office a couple of days each week starting in mid- to late-April and extending through October. More information will be available in April.

Deer Ticks Are Here!

The presence of deer ticks (black-legged ticks) has grown exponentially in Ohio and in Coshocton County in particular. These ticks can be active all year round and some specimens were brought to our local Extension office this winter for identification. Since these ticks can carry Lyme Disease, it is important for everyone to be on the lookout for them! Be aware that there are two other types of ticks in Ohio; dog ticks and lone star ticks can carry other diseases.

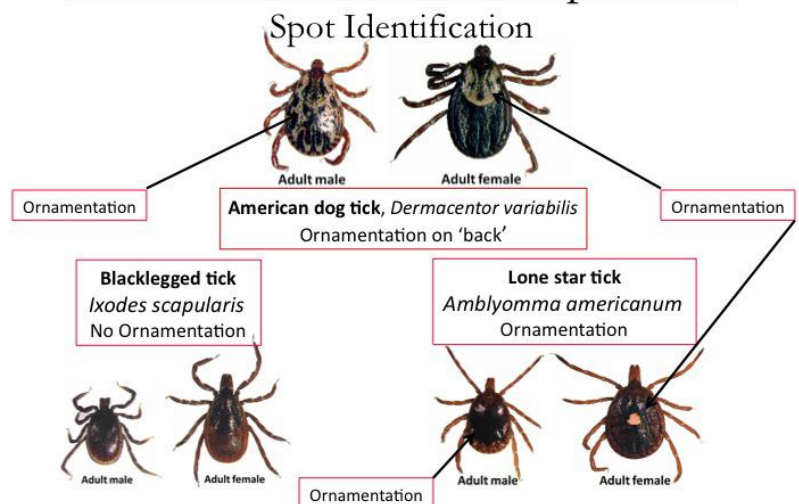
Deer ticks are smaller than dog ticks and have distinctly different markings as shown in the graphic. Specimens can be brought to the Coshocton County OSU Extension office for positive identification.

For more information, go to these links:

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/diseases/>

Ohio Dept. of Health: <https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/know-our-programs/zoonotic-disease-program/resources/tickborne-diseases>

OSU Extension: <https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/HYG-2073>

Three Ixodid Ticks of Importance

© G.R. Needham, The Ohio State University

Photos courtesy the Tick Research Laboratory, Texas A&M University
<http://tickapp.tamu.edu/>

Do You Know: Luther Burbank

By Margaret Lowe, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

1. Luther Burbank was known as the “plant wizard”.
2. Burbank was born in Lancaster, Massachusetts on March 7, 1849. He became a gardener to support his widowed mother.
3. Burbank would grow thousands of plants in order to produce one improved species. He once grew 40,000 berry bushes to produce one new kind.
4. He developed the *pomato*, which is a small tomato plant grafted and grown on a potato vine.
5. His quadruple hybrid “Shasta daisy” aroused more interest than his other flowers.
6. His best-known work is the “Burbank potato”. In poor health, he used the \$150.00 he received for his rights in the potato stock to move to Santa Rosa, California, and continued his work.
7. His main purpose for improving plants was to add to the food supply of the world.
8. The most difficult, expensive, and interesting experiments were his work in the desert with cactuses. Burbank spent sixteen years planting and studying more than six hundred varieties. He was “scarred, pitted and full of spines as a pin cushion.”
9. He was known world-wide; experts were sent to him for study - so many that he began to excuse himself from callers.
10. Burbank died on April 11, 1926. His great success was due to his persistence, devotion, and his keen eye for discovering the exceptional plant among many. He even squeezed in time to write his autobiography “The Harvest of the Years.”

Try Something New: Vegetables in Containers

By Margaret Lowe, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

You can grow just about any vegetable in a container including carrots, tomatoes, radishes, peppers, beets, beans, cucumbers and more. Choose a container appropriate for the size of the plant and root depth and be sure it has drainage holes. I use regular size pots for cherry tomatoes; window boxes for peppers; buckets for potatoes; a small tub for lima beans; and I even grew seven large tomatoes in a large plastic storage box (size 32x20 inches and 20 inches deep) last summer. Cardboard boxes make good containers because when the season is over you can put it all in the compost pile. My thought is, “if a container is empty, it gets potted”. I really enjoy trying something new each year just to see if it can be done - you never know until you try it. Container gardening comes with some advantages: the containers take up little space, require little weeding, and can be moved for better light, temperature or protection from harsh weather.

For the last two summers I have been carefully cultivating “Jackson Wonder” lima beans in containers, hoping to grow beans large enough to use as seed. These plants are climbers and I use stakes, requiring a large container. They germinate in only six to eight days and produce in about sixty-five days. The beans grow in broad, flat pods about three inches long, are very large, and become flecked with purplish color when dried. These lima beans are ones that my grandmother grew many years ago and the few seeds I had are from her. I am trying to produce seeds since the only time I found these beans in seed racks at a store was in 2006. Perhaps if I lived in the South I could find them every year because the packet described them as very popular there due to tolerance to heat and drought. With all the information now on the internet I do find them listed with many seed companies. I plan to sow a long row of these beans along the machinery garage wall in 2020 - that is if Mother Nature and I agree on the weather and rain does not dominate the spring like it did in 2019.

The 2020 Old Farmer’s Almanac, which is a favorite read of mine, has a fantastic article on tomatoes titled “Dwarf Tomatoes Stand Tall.” It is a very informative article about stocky, compact plants that produce early, produce big tasty yields, and are grown in pots. Try the website for the Almanac or go to the library to read this article - it is good.

So, try something different in a container this season. You never know until you try it!

For more information, go to: <https://extension.psu.edu/growing-vegetables-and-flowers-in-containers>

“No occupation is so delightful to me as the culture of the earth, and no culture comparable to that of the garden.” ~ Thomas Jefferson

Nature's Calendar

By Margaret Lowe and Gail Piper, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteers

For centuries farmers and gardeners have used the moon, specific dates, temperature and events to tell them when to plant. Although it is not guaranteed, many of us in this area use May 15 as the last frost date. A term that we often hear these days is “phenology”, the study of life cycles of plants and animals as they correlate to weather and temperature – a nature’s calendar. As weather patterns vary and local climates change, specific dates are no longer as reliable, so keeping an eye on these correlations can provide better guidance.

Phenology is an inexact science; variables include altitude, proximity to bodies of water or buildings, plant varieties, and more. However, phenological events follow the same general sequence every year and progress across the country from west to east and south to north. For example, lilacs generally bloom earlier in the western and southern United States than here in Ohio.

Temperature is the biggest factor and its effect is measured in units called “growing degree days” or GDDs. These units are computed by averaging the high and low temperatures for each day and subtracting a base temperature of 50. For example, a high temperature of 70 degrees added to a low temperature of 50 would be 120; divided by 2 equals the average of 60; subtracting the base of 50 equals 10 GDDs. These units accumulate as the season goes on. As of February 25, Coshocton had accumulated 29 GDDs; Walhonding and Fresno had 26.

We know that specific plants and insects exhibit certain behaviors at certain ranges of GDDs; a list of many of these is on the Ohio Phenology Calendar which can be found online at: <https://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/gdd/> Simply enter the date and zip code of your location to see what phenological events are taking place or to check on past events. Studying the calendar reveals many plant and insect correlations. For example, the first bloom of Eastern redbud trees and gypsy moth egg-hatch occur at about the same time, 191 and 192 GDDs. Therefore, treating gypsy moth larva could occur as soon as redbud blooms are seen. If one looks at the data from other years, one can see that these same events can occur on different dates, varying by as much as a few weeks. Therefore, using the phenology calendar can help with planting or dealing with pests at the most opportune time.

Suggestions for when to plant:

Peas.....	forsythias bloom
Potatoes.....	dandelion bloom
Corn.....	oak leaves appear
Beans, cucumber, squash.....	lilacs in full bloom
Tomatoes.....	lily-of-the-valley in full bloom
Onions.....	red maple bloom
Eggplant and peppers.....	iris bloom
Beets, carrots, lettuce, spinach, broccoli, Brussel sprouts.....	lilacs in first leaf
Morning glory.....	maple leaves full size
Zinnia, marigold.....	black locust full bloom
Pansy, snapdragons, annuals...	aspens leafed out

Another suggestion - onion sets and seed potatoes can be planted in containers earlier, in fact as soon as they appear in stores or garden centers. Thus, Mother Nature can be “controlled” if need be by bringing the containers into the garage or house if the weather demands.

More information about phenology can be found at these sites:

<https://www.usanpn.org/about/why-phenology>

<https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/phenology/>

https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/use_degree_days_and_plant_phenology_to_anticipate_timing_of_pest_problems_t

Another Invasive: Spotted Lanternfly

The spotted lanternfly was found in this country in 2014 and seems to be gaining a foothold. A native to Southeast Asia, this invasive insect has been found in Pennsylvania, Virginia and New York; recently it was seen in western PA close to the Ohio border. It is attracted to tree of heaven plants but has been found on over 70 plant species including grapes, hops, some field grains, and woody plants. The full potential threat is not yet known. It is a good idea to monitor tree of heaven plants for this pest; if found, please report it to the Ohio Department of Agriculture.

Photos of this insect can be found at Buckeye Yard and Garden onLine (BYGL): <https://bygl.osu.edu/node/1056>

March Garden Check List:

- ✓ Order seeds! Sow seeds indoors for annuals and warm-season vegetables.
- ✓ Prune shade trees.
- ✓ Wait for buds to break on roses before pruning. Cut out dead wood, trim to shape. For climbing types, only cut out dead wood.
- ✓ Don't be too hasty in removing winter protection.
- ✓ Cut back ornamental grasses and any dead tops of perennials and clean up beds.
- ✓ Apply a weed preventer as directed to prevent weeds in landscape beds.
- ✓ Trim or thin evergreen and deciduous shrubs toward the end of the month *except* spring-bloomers like lilac and forsythia.
- ✓ Plant bare root trees, shrubs and small fruits as soon as the ground is workable. March to early April planting will start the plants "rooting in" before bud break.
- ✓ Plant onion sets, peas, lettuce seed, asparagus and rhubarb as soon as the ground is workable.
- ✓ Soil test lawn and garden so that you may add amendments *before* the growing season.
- ✓ Apply crabgrass preventer & feed your lawn when the forsythia blooms.

April Garden Check List:

- ✓ Pot new seedlings.
- ✓ Cut the lawn when the grass blades are at least 2 inches tall.
- ✓ Prune hydrangea, rose of Sharon, buddleia and abelia.
- ✓ Feed roses, check for aphids on them.
- ✓ Keep an eye out for tent caterpillars.
- ✓ Last call to start tomato seeds indoors.
- ✓ Finish any clean up, trimming, edging, fertilizing and apply weed preventer if desired.
- ✓ Apply a balanced fertilizer to spring flowering bulbs early to promote health and bloom.
- ✓ Apply dormant oils to trees and shrubs when temperatures are above freezing.
- ✓ Divide and transplant perennial flowers as new growth begins or just before.
- ✓ Plant cold weather flowers such as pansy, primrose and violas for some early spring color.
- ✓ Plant needle-leaved evergreens.
- ✓ Resume feeding indoor plants every two to three weeks with half-strength liquid fertilizer.



Upcoming Events

March 4 & 5	Tiverton Farmers Institute	10:00 – all day
March 13	The Real Dirt on WTNS 99.3	9:00 – 10:00 am
March 23	Backyard Fruit Production Workshop	6:00- 8:00 pm
April 7	Career Center Open House	
April 10	The Real Dirt on WTNS 99.3	9:00 – 10:00 am
April 18	Earth Day, Coshocton Co. Career Center	Noon to 4:00
Late April – October	Diagnostic Clinic at the Extension Office – watch for more information!	

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

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

Phone: (740) 622-2265

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