

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

May – June 2022

Volume 19, Issue 3

Victory Garden Seeds Available!

Once again, OSU is offering Victory Garden Seed packets for free to interested persons! Included this year are seeds for growing cucumbers, carrots, Green Ice lettuce, and a sunflower mix. Seeds are available at the Extension Office and also at Extension events in the coming weeks. For more info about the seeds, go to: <https://u.osu.edu/ohiovictorygardens/sowing-the-seeds/>

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 May 13 and June 10. 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

A spotted lanternfly egg mass was found in Lorain Co. in February, the third Ohio county found to be infested. At the present time in the SLF lifecycle, eggs are hatching and the insect’s nymphs and first instar may be seen. It is a good idea to watch for any evidence of this invasive insect as it can cause damage to several Ohio crops such as grapes, hops, and more. More info can be found at: <https://bygl.osu.edu/node/1925>

“Name That Tree” Workshop

OSU Extension and Clary Gardens will host a “Name that Tree” Program on Wednesday, June 29 from 10:00 to 3:00 p.m. at Clary Gardens located at 588 West Chestnut Street in Coshocton, Ohio.

This one-day workshop is designed to give attendees in-depth training and practice on identifying trees using leaves and other common characteristics. The registration fee for this program is \$40 per person. This registration fee includes the program, light refreshments, lunch, and handouts. There is limited seating so pre-registration is due by June 21. For more information about this program, contact the Coshocton County Extension office at 740-622-2265 or go to this link:

<https://coshocton.osu.edu/news/%E2%80%99Name-tree-program>



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

Asparagus

By Margaret Lowe, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

Native to the Mediterranean, asparagus is a perennial vegetable grown for its nutritious shoots. A sunny, well-drained location with non-acidic soil is essential. If you plant your patch within your vegetable garden, place it on the west or north side as the plants will grow from four to seven feet tall and shade other vegetables. An asparagus plant will remain productive for ten to twenty years so be sure it is well-located.

Plant asparagus crowns in early spring in a furrow five to six inches deep and a foot apart. Do not harvest stalks the first year to allow plants to become well established. Asparagus is best eaten the day it is picked, but it can be refrigerated for several days.

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There is no cultivar for white asparagus; white stalks are grown by preventing sunlight from getting to the shoots so that they don't produce chlorophyll. This can be accomplished by covering the shoots with soil, mulch, row covers, an upside-down tub or box, or even capped PVC pipes.

Pests are seldom a problem with asparagus. However, there are the common asparagus beetle which is black in color with a blue head, and a spotted asparagus beetle which is orange with black spots. If either are noted on your plants, pick them off, destroy them, and check the plants for eggs.

Asparagus is easy to grow - so easy that you may see it growing along roads or in fields where seeds have blown. It is easy to recognize when mature because of the delicate feathery foliage. This foliage makes energy for next year's crop so let it grow. The foliage also makes cut flowers into a much prettier bouquet.

For more information: <https://u.osu.edu/bhanr/2016/03/28/anticipation-of-asparagus/>

Viceroy Butterfly – a Master of Disguise

By Margaret Lowe, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

Have you seen a monarch butterfly in the last couple of years? Maybe – or maybe not. For those who believe they have seen many monarchs the last few summers, I would suggest a close inspection to make sure. You may find that the beauty you saw is actually one of the monarch mimics - a viceroy (*Limenitis archippus*). It is very easy to call a viceroy a monarch because of the beautiful orange color and black lines; they are very similar in their coloring and markings. Once you learn to tell the difference it is easy to distinguish which one is which. Viceroys are usually smaller than monarchs. The simplest way to tell the difference between them is to look for the EXTRA black line that extends all the way across the lower wing of the viceroy. This can be seen whether the wings are open or closed. Monarchs have no black line across the lower wing. See the difference in these two photos from Arizona State University.

Viceroy caterpillars eat leaves of plants in the willow family. They do not migrate like the monarch; the caterpillars roll up leaves and shelter inside them through winter. Caterpillars resume eating in the spring, form a chrysalis, and soon new adults appear. The adults sip nectar – asters are a favorite – and are sometimes found feeding on fungi and carrion. Viceroy butterflies are found throughout most of the United States.



Top: Monarch butterfly
Bottom: Viceroy butterfly

Find more info here: <https://bugs.uconn.edu/2020/09/21/butterfly-of-the-week-viceroy/#>

Butterfly Habitat: Host and Nectar Plants Are Important

By Gail Piper, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

Many butterflies need host plants in order to raise their young; the female lays her eggs on specific plants that meet the nutritional needs of the larvae or caterpillars that develop. For example, only milkweed species (*Asclepias spp.*) are host plants for monarch butterflies (there are 13 species of milkweed that are native to Ohio). Eastern swallowtail butterflies use several trees including various ash, tulip, sassafras, and black cherry trees as hosts. Other butterflies have more specific needs – for example, the zebra swallowtail only uses pawpaw trees as a host. Availability of host plants is key to having an abundance of butterflies; the more common the host plant, the more abundant the butterfly that depends on it.

Besides the host plants for caterpillars, those of us who want to create a butterfly habitat need to consider nectar plants for the adult butterflies. Growing a variety of perennials and annuals so that something is in bloom from spring through the fall will provide a nectar smorgasbord all season long. Some butterflies are also attracted to rotting fruit, mud puddles, or sunny locations for warmth. This link gives more information on those attractants as well as charts of nectar and host plants: <https://extension.psu.edu/gardening-for-butterflies>

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife, has an excellent field guide “Butterflies & Skippers of Ohio” that is full of information about our native butterflies. The guide has excellent photos of both adults and caterpillars; it also includes the characteristics of each species as well as the range and seasonality. The guide (as well as other wildlife field guides) is downloadable at: <https://ohiodnr.gov/discover-and-learn/safety-conservation/about-odnr/wildlife/documents-publications/backyard-wildlife-documents>

Our Master Gardener Volunteer group promotes growing plants that attract butterflies, including milkweed for monarchs. We have given away hundreds of milkweed seeds; some seed packets are available at the Extension Office.

Lesser Celandine

By Margaret Lowe, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

Like many other plants, insects, birds and other items, the pretty yellow flower that covered many areas in the county this spring was brought into the country because it is pretty and someone liked it. Also called fig buttercup, lesser celandine (*Ficaria verna* [previously *Ranunculus ficaria*]) is a perennial plant in the buttercup family.

The plant came from Europe in the 1800s as an ornamental to enhance gardens. Now it has spread to natural areas and has become an invasive pest. It spreads quickly and can be difficult to kill. When trying to dig it for disposal, keep in mind that it has small bulbs on the roots and it will continue to grow if all the small bulbs are not removed. Because it grows and blooms early before trees leaf out in the spring, it is in competition with many of Ohio's native wildflowers.

Lesser celandine resembles the native plant marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*); however, it forms big carpets of green and yellow. The plant has rounded glossy leaves, 3 green sepals (modified leaves around the developing flower), and as many as 7 to 12 yellow petals. Mature plants often have small protruding bulbils above ground at the base of the leaf stems; those bulbils can hitchhike on the feet of animals and further spread the plant. Marsh marigold plants are found in wet areas, have larger leaves, and no underground bulbs or bulbils; the flower has 5 to 9 yellow petal-like sepals.

If you have early spring plants with yellow flowers growing in your yard it would be a good idea to identify the plant; if it is lesser celandine, plan to destroy it. By the way - where did it get the name "lesser"? As fast as it grows it should be called "more". (Editor's note: The name may come from the fact that it resembles a plant in the poppy family known as "greater celandine".)

Read more about lesser celandine here: <https://bygl.osu.edu/node/1446>

When Should I Prune My Flowering Shrubs?

By Gail Piper, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

When to prune shrubs is a common question – and the answer is, "It depends - when does the shrub bloom?" If flowering occurs in the spring, the shrub likely is blooming on old wood; prune soon after the flowers fade because buds for the next year are set in the next few weeks. Removing branches too late can result in no bloom the next spring. Shrubs common to our area in this category include beautybush; forsythia; fothergilla; oakeaf hydrangea; lilac; mock orange; flowering quince; rhododendron (and azaleas) if necessary; spring-flowering spirea; viburnum; and weigela.

Shrubs that bloom later in the summer or in the fall generally bloom on new wood. Since the buds on these shrubs are set after the new wood develops in the spring, they can be pruned in late winter or early spring. Shrubs in this category include Japanese barberry; butterfly bush; redosier dogwood; rose-of-Sharon; summer-flowering spirea; and winterberry.

There are several reasons to prune flowering shrubs. Removing dead, damaged, or old growth will reduce disease or infestation problems later on; it will also encourage new growth and rejuvenation. Thinning out branches by cutting them to the ground in the center of a shrub will allow more sunlight into the plant and improve air circulation which will help to control moisture-related problems. In this instance, it is common practice to remove no more than one-third of the oldest wood at one time. Branches that cross and rub against other branches should be removed to prevent damage to the shrub's bark. A shrub's height can be reduced by cutting branches back to a bud at a 45-degree angle; this is called "heading" and the general rule is to only remove one-third of the length of a branch at a time.

Overgrown shrubs that have stopped blooming such as forsythia, lilac, and spirea may benefit from rejuvenation pruning. In this instance, cut back the entire shrub to between 4 and 10 inches from the ground in early spring. Keep in mind that it may take a couple of years for the shrub to start blooming again.

The right tools will make pruning much easier – and keeping them sharp to make a clean cut is a must. Pruning shears are good for cutting small branches while lopping shears work well on larger ones. A hand saw or pruning saw is recommended for wood over an inch thick. It is also important to disinfect the tools between cuts to keep from spreading disease; alcohol (at least 70%) or a 10% bleach solution can be sprayed or wiped on the tools.

Find more info here: <https://extension.psu.edu/how-and-when-to-prune-flowering-shrubs>

Some specific shrub info can be found here: <https://mortonarb.org/app/uploads/2021/08/Pruning-deciduous-shrubs-by-species-1.pdf>

"In the night the cabbages catch at the moon, the leaves drip silver, the rows of cabbages are a series of little silver waterfalls in the moon."

~Carl Sandburg

May Garden Check List:

- ✓ Set out seedlings of warm-season annuals.
- ✓ Visit a local garden center.
- ✓ Set out summer-flowering bulbs.
- ✓ Plant fall-blooming bulbs.
- ✓ Divide and replant crowded spring-blooming bulbs after leaves yellow.
- ✓ Avoid spraying fruit trees with insecticide until after the petals have dropped.
- ✓ Cut faded blooms from daffodils and tulips to prevent seed formation- leave the foliage until brown.
- ✓ Remove flowers from newly planted strawberry plants to encourage development of runners.
- ✓ Remove suckers from fruit trees, lilacs, maples and magnolias.
- ✓ Train your lawn to grow deep roots; mow often at a high setting.
- ✓ Pinch side buds for larger flowers on peonies.
- ✓ Keep up on pulling weeds!

June Garden Check List:

- ✓ Sow sweet alyssum where spent pansies have been.
- ✓ Prune spring-blooming shrubs as soon as the blooms are finished.
- ✓ Set tropical water lilies in garden pools and ponds.
- ✓ Prune suckers from tomato plants.
- ✓ Prune dogwoods this month as correct shaping now will encourage a nice display next spring.
- ✓ Remove top leaf buds from chrysanthemums to encourage bushy growth.
- ✓ Pinch bedding plants to encourage branching.
- ✓ Plant another row of lettuce before the summer heat arrives.
- ✓ Take some time to enjoy the beauty of your garden.



Upcoming Events

May 13	The Real Dirt on WTNS 99.3	9:00 – 10:00 am
May 15	Frost-free date in our area – NOT guaranteed!!!	
May 30	Memorial Day – Extension Office closed	
June 10	The Real Dirt on WTNS 99.3	9:00 – 10:00 am
June 20	Observance of Juneteenth – Extension Office closed	
June 29	“Name That Tree” workshop at Clary Gardens	10:00 am – 3:00 pm

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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