

Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer Newsletter

KEEP IT GROWING!

September - October 2017

Volume 14, Issue 5

Thanks for Attending!!

Master Gardener Volunteers would like to thank all those who attended our programs over the past two months! Our July and August Lunch & Learns on spring wildflowers, gardening myths, and helping bees survive were well-attended. Cynthia Druckenbrod from the Cleveland Botanical Garden spoke at Frontier Power on August 8 - her presentation included info on insects and highlighted the monarch butterfly and praying mantis.

Also in August, Extension hosted a presentation on methods and rules for growing ginseng. Chip Carroll, Jeff Berry, and Jerrod Allison, teamed up for a very informative program.

More Programs to Come...

MGVs Offer Info at the Coshocton County Fair

It's fair time again! The Coshocton County Fair will start on Sept. 29 and end on Oct. 5.

Master Gardeners Volunteers will have a booth in the Youth Building again this year. Our focus is on monarch butterflies and the milkweed plants their larvae must eat. Stop by and pick up some factsheets on attracting butterflies to your garden and how to help monarchs!

Fall Foliage and Farm Tour

The Coshocton County Ohio State University Extension, Soil & Water Conservation District and Farm Service Agency will again sponsor a drive-it-yourself Fall Foliage and Farm Tour. The tour will be held Saturday, October 21, 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. and Sunday, October 22, 12:00 noon until 5:00 p.m. in Coshocton County. This year's tour will highlight the north-central section of Coshocton County. The tour will continue to focus on the history of the area as well as provide the opportunity for participants to have an up-close exper-

ience of a variety of agricultural enterprises along the tour route.

Tour maps, brochures, and registration will be at the first stop of the tour, The Animal Boutique & Villas, located at 23905 Airport Road just off U.S. Route 36, 3 miles east of Coshocton across from Wal-Mart. Maps are available on Saturday between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. and Sunday, from 12:00 Noon until 3:00 p.m.

Not only will participants have a chance to enjoy some outstanding fall scenery, the tour will include a sheep farm, an inland lighthouse, longhorn cattle, a distillery, a dairy farm, a winery and more! The lunch stop will be located at Shepler Church. The tour is free, but donations are appreciated.

If you would like additional information regarding the 2017 Coshocton County Fall Foliage and Farm Tour, please contact Emily Adams, OSU Extension - Coshocton County at 740.622.2265 or email: adams.661@osu.edu A flyer can be found online at: <https://coshocton.osu.edu/events/fall-foliage-farm-tour>

Bats: What You Didn't Learn Watching Batman

Whether you love them or hate them, there is no arguing that bats are both beneficial (pest control) and intriguing (the only mammal that can fly)! This evening presentation will take a closer look at Ohio's bat species and explore the ins and outs of their unique lives – just in time for Halloween! We will also discuss bat houses, current threats, and dealing with bats in buildings.

Join Marne Tichenell, OSU Extension Wildlife Specialist, on Tuesday, October 24 at 6:30pm in the Frontier Power Community Room. This program is free and open to the public, but reservations are appreciated by calling (740) 622-2265 or email adams.661@osu.edu by October 23. For a registration form, go to:

https://coshocton.osu.edu/sites/coshocton/files/imce/Program/Pages/ANR/Bat%20flyer%20102417_0.pdf

Best Wishes to Tammi Rogers, MGV Coordinator

Tammi Rogers, Agriculture Program Assistant and Master Gardener Volunteer Coordinator at OSU Extension in Coshocton County, has accepted a position with the Coshocton County Litter Prevention and Recycling Office as of August 28, 2017. She will work to provide educational programs to help reduce the amount of solid waste generated within our county and to encourage recycling.

Tammi joined OSU Extension as a program assistant in 2000. Under the direction of former Ag Educator Paul Golden, she started the MGV program soon afterward, splitting her time approximately 50/50 between ag programs and MGVs over the last 17 ½ years. She says she has enjoyed learning on the job and also helping others to learn about ag, horticulture, insects and wildlife, orchestrating 80 programs last year. Emily Adams will now assume those responsibilities.

Halloween Plants

By Margaret Lowe, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

Plants with spooky traits or flowers with quaint names can be found throughout the growing season. Some gardens are planted just for that specific reason – for example, an animal garden might be planted with: toad flax, tiger lily, bear breeches, dog's tooth violet, foxglove, elephant ears, fleabane, and monkey flower. Other specifically named plants could be used to plant a “category” garden.

These plants would fit well in a Halloween garden:

Witches Brooms - on trees, witches' brooms appear as dense clusters of twigs. They appear on many different woody plants. Brooms can form anywhere on a tree; there may be one or many, large or small. Fungi, mites and aphids can cause abnormal growth. Improper pruning may also cause witches brooms. A large broom on a tree can lead to the decline of a tree.

Spider flower - known as *Cleome*, the flower grows on very thin stems, giving the plant its characteristic “spider” look. The flowers are scented and come in pink, white and mauve.

Devil's Claw - *Proboscidea* produce long hooked pods filled with many seeds. Flowers are a pretty pink and a plant produces many pods. When dried, the hook part separates and looks somewhat like a bird. Many individuals use these in making crafts or in dried floral arrangements.

Corpse Flower - *Amorphophallus titanum*, raised in a botanical garden, is a huge, amazing plant native to the rainforests of Indonesia that has a smell that is described as putrid. It may take years for new plants to produce. A few years ago, Ohio State University had one for public display in Columbus. My daughter and I drove to Columbus just to look at this plant and it was well worth the drive. The plant was enormous and quite unique.

Witch Hazel – *Hamamelis* is considered a shrub that blooms in late winter to early spring with yellow, orange or red ribbon-like flowers. Oval leaves turn a bright yellow in the fall.

Goblin Blanket - *Gaillardia x grandiflora 'Goblin'* is a long-blooming blanket flower. The “Goblin” variety grows to twelve inches, likes full sun, and will tolerate poor, dry soil. They are brightly colored perennials with daisy-like flowers.

Devil's Walking Stick - these small trees are covered with sharp thorns and during winter with purple-black fruit that attracts birds. Native to the eastern United States, *Aralia spinosa* features flowers that draw pollinators.

Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative

Have you noticed the signs and plantings at the intersection of US Highway 36 and State Route 93? These plantings of wildflowers are courtesy of the Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative, a partnership of several entities that is concerned about the dwindling population of pollinators such as bees and butterflies in Ohio. The mission statement of the group is: “*To improve and create pollinator habitat in the state of Ohio, as well as raise awareness for all Ohioans regarding the importance of pollinators.*” Some of the partners include: USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service; American Electric Power; Ohio Dept. of Transportation; US Fish and Wildlife Service; OSU Extension; Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources; and Ohio Soil and Water Conservation Districts, among others.

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Besides roadside plantings, the initiative promotes the collection of milkweed seed (necessary for monarch butterfly caterpillars) and the planting of native nectar plants for pollinator gardens. “The Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative is a collaborative effort, and we invite you to join us in this effort to promote pollinator conservation. All you can, where you can!”

More information can be found online at: <http://www.ophi.info/home.html>

Cover Crops

By Reta Grewell, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteers

A cover crop is to feed, protect and maintain the soil. Cover crops blanket the soil throughout the winter, insulating the soil and keeping it more hospitable to earthworms and micro-organisms. The intricate network of roots buffers the soil against wind and water, and anchors it in place.

Cover crops are called “catch crops”; they absorb nutrients from the soil and hold them until they are tilled back into the soil, a process called “green manuring”. Cover crops build soil fertility by boosting biomass, thus increasing the organic content and food for earth worms and beneficial microorganisms. Decomposing green plants throw soil life into high gear. Soil structure and texture improve, leading to easier root penetration, increased nutrient distribution, better drainage and oxygen flow.

At summers end, plant winter hardy rye, wheat, barley, crimson clover, vetch or Austrian peas. For quick cover and quantity of organic matter, the grains will do the job. Cover crops that die over the winter will still protect the soil and be like a straw mulch, to be parted and planted through in the spring.

If nitrogen needs to be added to the soils, plant a legume. Legumes convert atmospheric nitrogen with the aid of symbiotic bacteria found in their roots; when tilled into the soil it becomes available to the next crop. If you are using legumes, plant them in early fall so the roots are established before cold weather sets in. Crimson clover can be planted between fall crops such as corn, peppers, tomatoes, and pole beans. Just clean debris from the beds, rake over the soil and broadcast by hand.

While rampant growth in the spring means abundance of organic matter to add to the soil, there can be too much of a good thing. Cover crops should be turned under before the stems become hardened, at about the height of eight inches. They can also be mowed off to keep in check before tilling.

As microbes are breaking down the cover crop, nitrogen and oxygen are tied up in the soil, so allow two to four weeks for soil life to return to normal before planting. The soil amendment is priceless!

For more information, try these links: <http://covercrops.cals.cornell.edu/>

<http://blog-crop-news.extension.umn.edu/2016/08/keep-it-simple-when-trying-cover-crops.html>

Outside – Inside

By Margaret Lowe, Coshocton County Master Gardener Volunteer

Cold weather is on its way and it is time to begin cleaning gardens, putting all those tools and hoses away. But first, it is time to prepare all those houseplants you took outside in the spring for returning inside.

Ideally, plants need time to adjust to life indoors. You might want to place them under a covered porch or a shaded spot. This will be an ideal time to check for insect pests such as spider mites or aphids.

A vigorous spray of water from a hose can help dislodge those common pests. Be sure to check plants before taking them in and placing with houseplants that did not go outside. You may want to hose those plants more than once. Any overlooked pests may infest everything you have inside.

To help the plants acclimate, give them as much light as possible and cut down on watering and fertilizing. Most houseplants grow more slowly in winter or even go dormant, so they need less water and fertilizer.

Plants in the home make living more enjoyable. Humidity increases in areas where plants are placed. Plants create cleaner air in enclosed spaces including office spaces; studies by NASA prove that certain houseplants can filter air and rid it of toxins. House plants produce oxygen and can also improve our mood by just being there. There is nothing more pleasing than seeing my orchids blooming in January while the snow is blowing outside. They also can put one in a better mood at work, leading to a more productive day. Placing plants in different parts of your house generates positive health benefits.

September Garden Check List:

- Place orders and plant spring-blooming bulbs and add bulb fertilizer to soil when planting.
- Plant peonies now, but make sure the crowns are buried only one and a half to two inches below ground level. Planting them deeper than two inches may keep them from blooming.
- Do not prune roses now. Tall canes can be loosely tied to keep them from being damaged from winter wind.
- Divide daylilies and other spring-blooming perennials.
- Cut off spent flower stalks and ugly or diseased foliage to neaten the appearance of the garden to prevent diseases from overwintering. Leave seed heads on your black-eyed Susans; they're a great food source for goldfinches.
- Destroy all diseased leaves and plants to prevent spreading disease.
- Finish planting new lawns or reseed thin patches and apply fertilizer to lawns.

October Garden Check List:

- Sow seeds of perennials in cold frames now for next year's blooming plants.
- Rake leaves and add them to the compost pile.
- Keep cutting the lawn until it stops growing.
- Cut to the ground blackberry and raspberry canes that bore fruit this year.
- Divide overgrown clumps of rhubarb.
- Plant garlic bulbs for next year's crop.
- Add manure, compost and leaves to increase the organic matter content of the soil, as fall is a good time for improving your garden soil.
- Mark your perennials with permanent tags, or create a map showing their locations so you'll know where and what they are when they die back at the end of the season. This will help you avoid digging up something you intended to keep when you plant bulbs and plants this fall and next spring.
- One last effort at weeding will help to improve the appearance of your garden throughout the winter.

Upcoming Events

September 4	Labor Day	
September 8	"The Real Dirt" on WTNS 99.3	9:00 am
Sept. 29 – Oct. 5	Coshocton County Fair	
October – Date TBA	"The Real Dirt" on WTNS 99.3	9:00 am
October 21 & 22	Fall Foliage and Farm Tour	
October 24	Bats: What You Didn't Learn Watching Batman	6:30 pm



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For Deaf and Hard of Hearing, please contact Coshocton County Extension using your preferred communication (e-mail, relay services, or video relay services). Phone 1-800-750-0750 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. EST Monday through Friday. Inform the operator to dial 740-622-2265.

Contact Coshocton Co. Extension at (740) 622-2265 or 724 South 7th Street, Room 110

Coshocton, OH 43812; visit the website at <http://coshocton.osu.edu/>

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Watch for FREE copies of "Keep It Growing" bi-monthly at: OSU Extension Office, Coshocton Public Library, West Lafayette Library, Cantwell Creek, Garden Patch, Baker's IGA, Buehler's, Warsaw ShopWise and Local Bounty. Available FREE via e-mail or the OSU Extension website. 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.

