



# Master Gardener Update

## February 2018

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<p><b>Quick Links</b></p> <p><a href="#">UW-Extension Rock County Website</a></p> <p><a href="#">Rotary Botanical Gardens</a></p> <p><a href="#">RPMGA Blogspot</a></p>	<p>Coinciding with the rollout of the program, several MGVs are developing a talk on starting seeds indoors, which will be given for the first time at Hedberg Public Library on Feb. 27 (see below), and at the Edgerton Public Library on March 18, and at other libraries as requested. The outline of this talk, handouts and materials will also be available for any MGV to use.</p>

## **WPT Garden Expo Feb 9-11, Alliant Energy Center, Madison**

As winter winds on in Wisconsin, the 25th-annual Wisconsin Public Television Garden Expo could offer you a bit of spring-like warmth and lots of chances to get in some education hours.

Garden Expo offers more than 150 seminars and demos on topics such as everything you need to know about jumping worms, how to grow the best tomatoes, floral arranging, fermenting vegetables, and landscaping your way to a dry basement. Most are free (after your entry and parking fees) and don't require pre-registration, though a few hands-on workshops do.

Highlighted speakers for the event: WPT's Around the Farm Table host Inga Witscher, nationally-known gardening expert Melinda Myers, Wisconsin author Jerry Apps, Wisconsin Public Radio's Larry Meiller, United Kingdom-based "Mr. Plant Geek" Michael Perry, garden blogger and author of *Kiss My Aster: A Graphic Guide to Creating a Fantastic Yard Totally Tailored to You* Amanda Thomsen, award-winning garden educator, and author and design consultant Kerry Ann Mendez. In addition, UW-Extension horticulture experts offer insight, plant identification and tips to gardeners and amateur landscapers of all level.

For more info, go to [www.wigardenexpo.com](http://www.wigardenexpo.com).

## **Rotary Gardens Events**

**Tapping Trees to Make Syrup**, with Dave Bendlin. Saturday, Feb 24, 1-2:30 p.m. \$20/\$15 members. Registration required by Feb. 21. Did you know? Wisconsin is one of the largest producers of maple syrup in the United States! Syrup production takes place largely in the central and northern counties of the state, this is where native sugar maples are most common. But — there are other trees that can be tapped to make syrup here in southern Wisconsin! The most common of these is the Box Elder Tree and the syrup that can be made from its sap has a delicious flavor which is comparable to maple syrup.

In this program, Dave Bendlin will guide you through the steps of tapping trees, collecting their sap and cooking the sap down into syrup. If the syrup making

season has progressed well, there will be samples for you to taste and possibly even purchase (cash only).

If weather permits, we will go outdoors to tap trees; please dress for the weather. Bring a 1 gallon plastic milk or water jug (no juice containers please). *You should rinse out and air out your gallon jug before attending.*

## **RPMGA Events**

**Prairie Seed Processing:** Thursday, February 8, 5:30-7:00 p.m. Check the blog ([rpmga.blogspot.com](http://rpmga.blogspot.com)) for location. Rather than an education program, this is a volunteer opportunity to help process seeds collected from a local prairie. We'll use them later as part of RPMGA's ongoing pollinator project.

**Starting Seeds for Your Garden:** Hedberg Public Library, Tuesday, Feb. 27, 6-7:30 p.m. Free and open to the public.

Starting seeds for your garden is much less expensive than buying nursery grown sets, and often gives you many more choices. It's generally very easy, and can be highly rewarding. In this program, a team of Master Gardener Volunteers (MGVs) will teach the fine points of starting seeds at home. The class will start with choosing the appropriate plants from seed catalogs, will address how to assemble and use the proper equipment and explain the process of choosing and setting up a dedicated location in the home. Once the students have experienced the process for the first time, they can go forward into the future using purchased or saved seeds to start sets each year.

We will explain what equipment the students will need, give advice on how to choose seeds, provide documentation on when to start the chosen seeds, and give a brief presentation on how to test seed viability by germination testing prior to planting. During the last half hour of the class attendees will also be able to do hands-on seed starting in mini-greenhouse kits which they can take home with them.

## Additional Educational Opportunities

In the coming weeks, some other intriguing educational opportunities are coming up through Welty Environmental Center, Allen Centennial Gardens, Michael Fields Institute, the Hoard Museum, the UW's Horticulture Department and the University of Illinois Extension. See the calendar below and consult their web sites for additional information.

## February Calendar

**RBG = Rotary Botanical Gardens, Janesville; OBG = Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison; ACG = Allen Centennial Gardens, Madison, Welty = Welty Environmental Center, Beloit, UIEX = University of Illinois Extension, Winnebago County (Rockford).**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 Orchid Quest OBG/ Engendered Is the Flower ACG
4 Orchid Quest OBG	5	6 Hort Highlights of 2017 OBG	7	8 Prairie Seed Processing RPMGA	9 WPT Garden Expo	10 WPT Garden Expo/ Nature's Second Chance Welty EC
11 WPT Garden	12	13	14	15 Managing Storm	16	17 Pretty Things with

<b>Expo</b>				<b>water in Your Landscape OBG</b>		<b>Wings ACG</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20 Annual Grasses OBG</b>	<b>21 Pruning Old or Neglected Apples UIEX</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24 Tapping Trees to Make Syrup RBG/ All about Hops ACG</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27 Seed Starting Hedberg RPMGA/ Native Shrubs OBG</b>	<b>28</b>			

### **Looking Ahead to March:**

The following events are early in the month and most require pre-registration and a fee. Check the link shown or go to the garden's website for more info.

**March 1, Thursday**, OBG, Adding a Tropical Twist to Your Garden. Talk by Mark Dwyer.

**March 3, Saturday**, Masterclass: Winterfruit Pruning, West Ag Research Station, Madison, WI. Learn more or register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/masterclass-winter-fruit-pruning-tickets-42476491329>

**March 3, Saturday**, OBG, Majestic Maples.

**March 3, Saturday**, Hoard Museum/Fort Atkinson, Bugs! With the Insect Ambassadors from the UW-Madison

**March 3, Saturday**, Michael Fields Institute/East Troy, Seed Saving for Beginners and seed swap.

**March 3, Saturday**, UIEX/Rockford, Gardening For Food Flowers and Fun

**March 6, Tuesday**, OBG, Coping with Sloping.

**March 10, Saturday** UW Plant Propagation Workshop in the DC Smith Greenhouses in Madison. See the Jan. or Feb Volunteer Vibe for info on how to register.

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