

Master Gardener Update

January 2020

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Bing Cherry

Prunus avium



Quick Facts:

Hardiness Zone: 5 to 8

Mature Height: 12-35'

Spread: 12 to 25'

Growth Rate: Medium - 12-14" per year

Shape: Rounded


Sun: Full. At least 6 to 8 hours of direct, unfiltered sun each day.

Soil preference: Prefers well-drained, sandy soil, but adapts to a wide range of soils.

Water: Not drought-tolerant. Needs regular watering through dry periods.

Bloom Time: Early spring

Flower: Clusters of white flowers with a delightful fragrance

<p>Websites</p> <p>UW Extension Rock County: rock.uwex.edu</p> <p>MGV Hours Reporting: wimastergardener.org/ report-your-hours/</p> <p>RPMGA Blog: rpmga.blogspot.com</p> <p>RPMGA on Facebook: Hit control/click on this link: RPMGA on Facebook</p> <p>Rotary Gardens: rotarybotanicalgardens.org</p> <p>Wisconsin Master Gardener Program: wimastergardener.org</p> <p>Wisconsin Master Gardener Association (WIMGA): wimga.org</p>	<p>When it comes to sweet cherries, the Bing variety tops the list in terms of popularity and production. This hallmark of cherry trees is known as the standard for cherry flavor and can be a major producer once mature. In fact, a standard Bing cherry tree can provide as much as 50–100 lbs. of cherries per year!</p> <p>Establishment and Maintenance</p> <p>When planting, enrich the soil with homemade compost or composted manure to begin its life with optimal nutrition. Plant early in the season because leaf buds open early and the roots are slow to establish. Space competing trees 14 to 20 feet apart. Replenish the organic material around your existing trees annually by top-dressing the soil with a few inches of compost and an inch or so of shredded bark compost to ensure good moisture retention and drainage. At spring bloom time, fertilize these trees with 2 pounds of urea or a top-dressing of composted manure. After the summer harvest repeat the fertilization process. If you are using urea for fertilizer, soak the soil around the tree with generous amounts of water immediately after applying the urea.</p> <p>Pollinizers</p> <p>Bing requires cross-pollination with a compatible variety of cherry that has a similar bloom time. The pollinizer tree should be growing within 100' for standard trees (20' for dwarf trees). Good pollinizers for Bing include: Black Republican, Sam, Black Tartarian, Schmidt, Cavalier, Stella, Gold, Van, Heidelfingen, Vega, Montmorency, Vista, Ranier and Windsor.</p>	<p>Quick Facts, continued</p>  <p>© Tree-Pictures.com</p> <p>Leaf: Simple dark green leaves that measure 3–6" long and have blunt teeth on the margin. Fall color, yellow.</p> <p>Fruit: Large, heart-shaped fruit with a firm, meaty, purplish-red flesh and a semi-free stone — ideal for eating fresh, baking, and preserves.</p> <p>Fruiting time: Begins to bear fruit at 5 to 6 years of age. Yields uniformly ripe fruit sometime in mid-June or mid-summer.</p> <p>Attracts: A variety of birds and mammals relish the cherries. The foliage may be browsed by animals like wild deer and/or domestic goats as well. It is pollinated by a wide range of insects.</p>
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Pollinators

Wind, water, insects, birds and mammals all help pollinate Bing cherries, but the most common agents for pollination are insects, particularly bees. The highly concentrated, sugary nectar of sweet cherry blossoms attracts honeybees, as does the protein-rich pollen. For each trip a bee makes to an area with cherry trees, it can visit more than 400 flowers. Once bees find a good food source, they will return repeatedly, making them an important cherry pollinator.

Pruning

Proper pruning not only improves productivity but increases the number of blossoms and the quality of the fruit. Appropriate pruning opens up the tree canopy to light, which is critical for blossom development and optimal fruit set, flavor and quality. Prune in late winter or early spring. The ideal time to prune is just as the buds begin to swell. Pruning at that time encourages rapid healing rather than allowing wounds to remain open for an extended period of time; it also avoids winter injury. The University of Wisconsin-Madison, Division of Extension offers a publication with detailed information on proper pruning techniques.

[Growing Apricots, Cherries, Peaches, and Plums in Wisconsin – publication A3639 – is available online. Click here to download the pdf.](#)





Diseases

Regular watering during dry spells is essential since these trees are prone to root disease.

History and Lore

The exact details of the Bing cherry's origin are not clear, but it was named in honor of a Chinese man named Ah Bing. He was a co-worker and nursery foreman for Seth Lewelling, the man who developed the Bing variety into America's number one cherry. Some believe it was Bing who developed the new cultivar and who should receive the credit for doing so. The first tree came from the seed of another new variety, Republican, in 1875. Today there are over 1000 varieties of sweet cherries, and Bing is still the cherry against which all others are compared.

Mary Kay Thompson

Programs and Tours for 2020: Please respond to survey!

We're mapping out programs for the coming year, but before anything is finalized, we need your input. You should have received an email from the RPMGA google group (dated Dec. 31) listing ideas for our monthly meetings. What topics and tours are you most interested in for this year? We make plans based on the ideas that the largest number of people show an interest in. But first priority is given to suggestions that come directly from MGVs, so if you'd like to learn about a place or topic not on the list, please let us know what that is.

If you don't recall seeing the survey, please drop a note to Ruth Flescher (email: yafello2@gmail.com) and she'll send you a copy.



RPMGA Event:

Winter Houseplant Care

Thursday, January 9, 5:30-7:00 P.M.

Is your home a lush jungle, or do you just hope for a little fresh greenery to cheer you through the brown months until spring? Do you know a bit about houseplants? Do you have a favorite plant you'd like to share information about with others? Or perhaps you have a plant you'd like to find a new home for. Do you have a problem with one of your plants or a question you'd like answered?

RPMGA's January education program will be a discussion (rather than a presentation) of what we know about babying our houseplants through the cold months. Light, humidity, watering, fertilizing, pruning, potting up and propagating are all areas we hope to touch on. We'll have some resources on-hand, but nothing beats experience. The more people who come, the more knowledge we'll have to share. Please join us! With luck, we'll have clear skies and dry roads for this event.

If you wish to bring a houseplant with you: Cold weather can quickly damage houseplants. To protect your babies, and get them safely to Hedberg and home again, here are some tips: 1. Warm your car before putting plants in it. 2. Pack your plants in closed paper bags or wrap them in newspaper. (Paper insulates better than plastic, but if you don't have a paper bag, a plastic bag is

better than nothing. We'll have some tape so you can seal them back up for the trip home.) 3. Take them to the car just before you leave. 4. Place them where they're unlikely to fall over—braced in the front footwell or strapped in the passenger seat, not in the trunk. 5. Don't let the leaves touch the windows. 6. Bring them back inside as soon as you get home so they don't sit in a cold car.

Date: Thursday, January 9, 2020

Time: 5:30 -7:00 p.m.

Location: Hedberg Public Library, Lower level meeting room, opposite the cafe

From the Year-End Potluck:

About 25 Master Gardener Volunteers and friends got together on Thursday, December 5 to celebrate our 2019 achievements.

Horticulture Outreach Specialist Julie Hill told us that by the end of reporting for 2019, 33 Master Gardener Volunteers had given 2,455 hours of volunteer service for an estimated value of \$58,927 (Independent Sector). That's an average of almost 75 hours per MG, when only 24 hours are required. We also reported 556 hours of continuing education (almost 17 hours per person vs. 10 hours required) and reached an estimated 7,945 individuals with various outreach projects. Julie also presented the awards for cumulative hours milestones, then surprised us with local awards recognizing the roles different people played in the year's events.

And courtesy of Sue Tucker-Pann, here's a recipe that was much requested:

Glistening Cranberry Ring

- 2 c. boiling water, divided
- 1 pkg. (4-serving size) lemon flavor gelatin
- ½ c. salad dressing (miracle whip type, not mayo)
- 2 c. thawed whipped topping
- 1 pkg. (4-serving size) cranberry flavor gelatin (or other red gelatin if you can't find cranberry)
- 1 can (16 oz.) whole berry cranberry sauce
- 1 can (11 oz.) mandarin oranges, drained

Stir 1 cup of the boiling water into lemon gelatin in medium bowl at least 2 minutes or until completely dissolved. Set aside to cool

Add lemon gelatin gradually to the salad dressing, mixing until blended. Gently fold in whipped topping. Pour into a greased 2-quart mold and refrigerate till almost set.

Stir remaining 1 c. boiling water into cranberry gelatin in medium bowl at least 2 minutes or until completely dissolved. Gently stir in cranberry sauce until well blended. Stir in oranges. Pour into mold over lemon layer. Refrigerate till firm. Can be made up to 2 days ahead.

Leave in mold, covered, until ready to serve, then unmold onto serving plate. Makes 8-10 servings.

(Note: Sue says Woodman's was the only place she was able to find the cranberry gelatin.)



Looking Ahead Through 2020

Rock County MGVs are already committed to giving a number of talks or being involved in various events for 2020. Here's what's on the calendar to date. (You can still get involved in many of these events if you're interested in volunteering. Just ask.)

Events Already on the 2020 Calendar

February 11, Tuesday, Winter Sowing talk at Hedberg Public Library, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

February 29, Saturday, UW-Whitewater—Leap into Spring Gardening, a morning workshop on garden planning and preparation by Julie Hill and Rock and Walworth County MGVs

Around March (date TBD) Are These Seeds Still Good? Germination Testing talk at Whitewater Public Library

April 18, Saturday, Earth Day Celebration at Rotary Gardens, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Late April of Early May (date TBD) at the Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (WCBVI, the school for the blind in Janesville)—MGVs work with kids on a day in the garden

June 9, Tuesday, Lifelong Gardening talk at Beloit Public Library

June 25, Thursday, Pollinator Gardening talk at Grinnell Hall Senior Center

August 27, Thursday, Raise Your Garden to New Heights (Raised Bed Gardening) talk at Grinnell Hall Senior Center

October 22, Thursday Growing Succulents talk at Grinnell Hall Senior Center

Events Likely in 2020, But Not Definite

Janesville Farmers Market, 2 dates during the season (Saturdays, May to October, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.)

Beloit Farmers Market, 2 dates during the season (Saturdays, May to October, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.)

Table at the Tallman Arts Festival in August, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Fall garden talk at Hedberg Public Library, topic TBD

Ongoing Events

Rotary Gardens—MGVs act as tour guides, ambassadors, gardeners, children's programs, etc.

RECAP gardening program and its related CSA—MGVs work with the sheriff's office and county jail teaching gardening and managing the CSA that helps support the program.

Winter Workshops by Mark Dwyer

at the UWW-Rock County Campus in Janesville. Three dates. Three topics per date. Three hours of CEUs per date. The price for each date is \$25 (or \$60 if you sign up for all three). Here's what Mark will cover:

Saturday, January 18: gardening as we age, the sensory garden and container gardening

Saturday, February 1: new introductions in annuals, perennials and woody plants (trees & shrubs)

Saturday, February 15: landscape design basics, color combinations, texture with maintenance in mind

Classes will be held in Hyatt Smith 120, and will run from 8:40 to noon each time. The campus is located at 2909 Kellog Avenue in Janesville. Registrations accepted until the day before the workshop unless sold out. If you have questions or need more information contact Molly Cook (cookmj24@uww.edu), (608) 758-6549. To register, go to: https://uw-whitewater.ungerboeck.com/prod/emc00/Public-SignIn.aspx?&SessionID=fakei8ei5eilfe8ei5&Lang=*

And at Blackhawk Tech. Mark is also offering several workshops at Blackhawk Technical College in Janesville, starting in February. Each one meets on both Tuesday and Thursday evening for two consecutive weeks. Classes run from 6-8:00 p.m. each night, for a total of 8 hours of CEUs. For instructions on how to register, go to:

<https://www.blackhawk.edu/Portals/0/PDFs/CommunityEdSchedule.pdf>

Beginning Tuesday, February 4: Wellness in the Garden. Topics including Gardening for All Ages; Adapting the Garden; Appropriate Garden Tools & Tasks; and The Sensory Garden.

Beginning Tuesday, Feb 18: Garden Plants, Tried and True. Topics include Trees and Shrubs; Perennials; Annuals & Bulbs; and Vegetables and Herbs.

Beginning Tuesday, March 17: Container Gardening. Selecting/Preparing the Container; Seasonal Containers; Planting the Container; and Container Care & Maintenance.

Beginning March 31: Basic Landscape Design. Topics include Elements of Design; Site Evaluation / Defining Function; Applied Landscape Design; and Evaluation of Design / Maintenance.



January 2020 Education Calendar

For details on any of these education opportunities, search the web using the program title and/or organization name.

NATC = Nature at the Confluence, South Beloit, IL; UWA = UW Arboretum, Madison; RPMGA = Rock Prairie Master Gardener Association, Janesville; DCUWEX = Dane County UW Extension, Madison; ACG = Allen Centennial Garden, Madison; WEC = Welty Environmental Center, Beloit; UIEX = University of Illinois Extension, Freeport, IL; UWW = UW Whitewater Rock County Campus; OBG = Olbrich Botanical Garden, Madison

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 <i>New Year's Day</i>	2	3	4 Winter Tree and Shrub ID NATC
5 Phenology Walk UWA	6	7	8	9 Winter House-plant Care RPMGA/ Arboretum Bluebird Trail UWA	10 Winter Seminar Series: Plant Diseases & Woody Plant Selection DCUWEX	11 Gardening Without Gravity ACG
12 Shoe Box Kitchen Waste Composting WEC	13	14 NW IL Agronomy Summit: Nutrients and Pest Mgt. UIEX	15	16 How Winter and Invasive Plants Modify Small Mammal Behavior...UWA	17 Winter Seminar Series: Effects of Cold Temps & Perennials DCUWEX	18 Gardens Full of Life ACG/Garden Workshop by Mark Dwyer (See above) UWW
19 Winter Wonderland Walk UWA	20 <i>MLK Jr Day</i>	21 2020 New Garden Trends OBG	22 Pruning Older or Neglected Apple Trees UIEX/ Climate and Coffee WEC	23 Citizen Science at the Arboretum UWA	24 Winter Seminar Series: Insect Damage & New Herbaceous Perennials DCUWEX	25 Our Urban Tree Canopy: Niches and Policies ACG

26 January Thaw Walk UWA	27	28	29 Creative Native Bee House Workshop OBG	30 The Tallgrass Prairie: a Conversation UWA	31 Organic Vegetable Production Conference DCUWEX/Winter Seminar Series: Woody Plants for Shade & Abiotic Turf Issues/Alternatives to Glyphosate DCUWEX	February 1 Organic Vegetable Production Conference DCUWEX
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Looking ahead to February

The following events occur early in February, but require registration in January. Classes take place at Olbrich Botanical Gardens unless otherwise noted.

Fantastic Ferns and How to Grow Them, Tuesday, Feb. 4, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Registration Deadline: January 27.

Cultural Significance of Nature and Gardening to Indigenous Tribal People, Saturday, Feb. 1, 9-11:00 a.m. at the Pyle Center, 702 Langdon St, Madison. A program of Allen Centennial Garden. Registration Deadline: January 31.

New Introductions in Annuals, Perennials and Woody Plants (trees & shrubs), Saturday, February 1, 8:40 a.m. to noon. At the UW-Whitewater Campus in Janesville. Registration deadline: January 31

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