

Master Gardener Update

July 2018

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Bumble Bees

Bombus sp.

Bumble bees are some of our most recognizable bees. They are amongst our largest bees and can be close to 1 inch long, although many species are between ½ inch and ¾ inch long.

There are approximately 20 species of bumble bees in Wisconsin and most have a robust, fuzzy appearance. Bumble bees tend to be very hairy and have black bodies with patches of yellow or orange depending on the species.

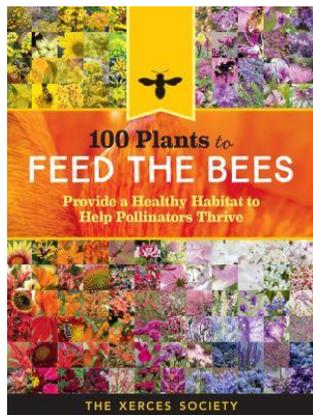
Bumble bees are a type of social bee and live in small colonies consisting of dozens to a few hundred workers. Their nests tend to be constructed in preexisting underground cavities, such as former chipmunk or rabbit burrows. Occasionally, they will nest in hollow spaces within compost piles, hay bales, and similar above ground spots in yards.

Luckily, bumble bees are typically docile and are unlikely to sting unless their nest is disturbed. They



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<p>Websites</p> <p>UW Extension Rock County: rock.uwex.edu</p> <p>RPMGA Blog: rpmga.blogspot.com</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>can be active during cool periods when most other insects are inactive. Bumble bees are great at pollinating certain plants, such as tomatoes, and are often used in greenhouses for pollinating vegetables.</p> <p>Bumble Bee Fast Facts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A queen emerges from hibernation in spring and finds a nest site, such as an abandoned rodent burrow. 2. She creates wax pots to hold nectar and pollen in which she lays and incubates her eggs. 3. When her daughters emerge as adults they take over foraging and other duties. 4. In autumn the colony produces new queens and male bees who leave to find mates. Newly mated queens hibernate and the rest of the bees die. <p><i>Sources:</i> <i>UWEX Wisconsin Bee Identification Guide A4142</i> <i>Xerces.org – Fast Facts</i> <i>Photo credit: Mary Kay Thompson – Hedberg Public Library Pollinator Garden</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Mary Kay Thompson</i></p>
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Good Summer Read from the Pollinator Experts: 100 Plants to Feed the Bees

Published by the Xerxes Society, this book is a great quick reference to help you find plants that support pollinators. After a general overview of pollinators and gardening, the meat of the book—the plant profiles—is organized by sections that cover native wildflowers, native trees and shrubs, introduced trees and shrubs, introduced herbs and ornamentals, and bee pasture plants. For each plant within a section, it gives info on what pollinators that plant attracts and why, when the plant blooms (so you can cover the whole season), growing requirements and more. It’s easy to browse when you just have a few minutes here or there. In Rock County, the Arrowhead Library System has both print and electronic versions available to borrow. Maybe it’ll convince you to let some of that basil bloom once you have enough for yourself!

How Native Bees Benefit Crops

Research conducted across North America has demonstrated that a huge variety of native bees play a critical role in crop production. Sometimes the pollination benefit they provide to agriculture surprises us.

- In California, more than 60 species of native bees have been observed visiting watermelons, sunflowers, and tomatoes.
- More than 80 species of bees have been recorded pollinating berry crops in Maine and Massachusetts.
- More than 100 native bee species have been found visiting cranberry bogs in Wisconsin.
- In Nova Scotia, 67 species of native bees visit low-bush blueberries.
- In Michigan, 112 species of bees were observed during the bloom period of high-bush blueberries.
- More than 100 native bee species have been documented in New York and Pennsylvania apple orchards.
- Native pollinators have been shown to nearly triple the production of cherry tomatoes in California. • If enough natural habitat is close by, native bees may provide all of the pollination necessary for many crops and act as an insurance policy for times when honey bees are in short supply.
- Wild, native bees improve the pollination efficiency of honey bees in hybrid sunflower seed crops by causing them to move between male and female rows more often. Only the fields with both abundant native bees and honey bees had 100 percent seed set.
- Research suggests that where honey bees are absent, canola growers in Alberta, Canada, make more money from their land if 30 percent is left uncultivated, as natural habitat. This habitat supports populations of native bees close to fields, which increases bee visits and seed production in the adjacent crops.



Source: Attracting Native Pollinators: Protecting North America's Bees and Butterflies – The Xerces Society Guide, Chapter 11 – Pollinator Conservation on Farms, How native Bees Benefit Crops - Page 184. Reproduced with permission.

RPMGA July Program: Tour 3 MGV Gardens, Thursday, July 12, 9:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.

For this month's program, two master gardeners are opening their home gardens to us in Janesville, plus we'll see the pollinator demonstration garden at Hedberg Public Library.

We'll start at Art and Linda Hilker's home: "Ours is a cottage garden 25 years in the making. Veggies are limited to pole beans and garlic. Fruit is limited to everbearing raspberries. The balance is annuals, perennials and shrubs. We have strived to select plants with variation in color, texture and form to result in bloom periods and beauty throughout the growing season. If we like it we plant it. Particular emphasis has been on the therapeutic aspects of our garden."

Then we'll move on to the home of Cindy Boehning: "My garden is a half-acre, mostly perennials, some annuals & a large vegetable garden. Every year I convert more lawn into garden beds. I have some unusual garden art such as the centerpiece of the backyard is a barn cupola surrounded by Magellan Mix Zinnias. I have a large bed of State Fair & Benary Giant Zinnias, which I grow especially in memory of my Mother. Zinnias were one of her favorite flowers so every weekend I take a bouquet of Zinnias to her grave. We have the added stress of losing quite a few trees in a storm in mid-June. Still dealing with that so it's certainly interesting & very stressful."

We'll finish the tour outside Hedberg Public Library with the pollinator garden there. It's a new garden, planted late last summer, so some of the perennials are still establishing. Even so, there has been color since early spring. We'll talk about choices, challenges and plans for additional development and use.

When/where to meet: 9:45 a.m., Milton Ave, in the parking lot in front of Office Depot/Penzeys/Schnucks. It's a short ride from there to Hilkers'. (Sorry for the extra step, but we don't want to publish the addresses here.)

If anyone wants to, we could go to lunch at Citrus afterwards.

Upcoming programs: August will be an evening program late in the month to accommodate the speaker, Dan Ziehli, who is the DATCP Bee Inspector for the southern half of Wisconsin. So we'll be talking pollinators. September 6 at 1:00 p.m., we've got a tour of gardens at Nature at the Confluence in South Beloit.

Rotary Gardens Event: Wild Edible and Poisonous Plants Walk, Saturday, July 14, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

There are many reasons why people might have an interest in learning more about wild edible plants: an interest in natural/organic foods, as an outdoor hobby, as a way to save money, and for those with an interest in developing survival skills.

In this outdoor program, naturalist Dave Bendlin will lead participants in a hike around the gardens and the woodland trails across the street to observe and identify a variety of common wild edible plants. Registration required: limited to 25 participants. Cost: \$10 members/\$15 non-members. Rain Date: Sunday, July 15

Rotary Gardens Event: Botanic Talk: The Monarch Kingdom, Thursday, July 19, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Shelly Culea will speak about her experiences in the Monarch Butterfly Sanctuaries of Mexico. In 2015, Shelly visited several UNESCO protected Monarch sites located in the rugged and remote mountains west of Mexico City. She will tell us about her journey and show us amazing photos from her trip. These awe-inspiring photos show, among other things, millions of hibernating Monarch butterflies just before they leave for their return journey to the United States. Shelly will bring the incredible story of the great migration of the Monarch butterflies to life with her presentation.

Raising Monarchs from egg to release is a passion for Shelly. To date, she has released more than 400 Monarchs from her butterfly nursery. She gives Monarch presentations to Milwaukee area nature centers, garden clubs and schools to help raise awareness of the Monarch butterfly. She also helped organize the Monarch Information Booth for BioBlitz, a biological surveying project that helps record all living species within a designated area. The BioBlitz events are held at the Schlitz Audubon Center and Grant Park in Milwaukee. She is a current member and past Garden Club president of the Woman's Club of Wisconsin. Shelly is a member of the Herb Society of America, Wisconsin Unit.

Cost: \$7 non-member, \$5 RBG Members; includes printed and note taking materials (where applicable), admission to Rotary Botanical Gardens, and light refreshments. Tickets to this event may be purchased at the door, or online, in advance.

Please note: if you would like to view the Gardens, please arrive with time prior to the beginning of the presentation as the Gardens close at 8:00 p.m. Those under 16 must be accompanied by an adult, who is also required to purchase a ticket.





Rotary Gardens Event: Home Garden Tour, Saturday, July 21, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Rain or Shine

Mark your calendars for this year's tour which features six beautiful home gardens, the gardens at St. John Vianney Church and Rotary Botanical Gardens. Tickets are ON SALE NOW in Rotary's Garden Gift Gallery and at K & W Greenery. All proceeds help sustain the continued operation and growth of the Gardens. *\$10 in advance/\$12 day-of event.*

MGVs in Action

Bev Drew (right) and Deb Grams talked bees and various pollinator houses at the Rock County employee health fair on June 21st. Says Deb, "It was fun."



Volunteer Opportunities:

Ongoing: Gardening Help at RBG. The gardens are 90% planted and filling in quickly with the warmth and rain, but the weeds have taken off as well and RBG is greatly in need of daily morning gardening help (8 a.m. - noon) for any length of time you might be able to spare.

Wednesday, July 18: Rotary Gardens Community Day Youth Activities. 1.) Volunteers needed for several hours during the day to help with a variety of children's activities in connection with the monthly Community Appreciation Day. 2.) Any time from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. (set your own time): volunteers to talk with families viewing the story walk about what we can learn from the featured story and how parents can encourage children to expand the knowledge gained from the story. Frog knowledge would be essential for this volunteer opportunity. For either 1.) or 2.), contact Barb Converse, mastergardenerbarb@gmail.com.

Saturday, July 21: Rotary Gardens Home Garden Tour. Docents (and ticket takers) still needed for some shifts at each of the eight sites on the day of the event, plus a general orientation on July 11 and an on-site orientation. If interested, contact the Volunteer Department at volunteer@rotarygardens.org.

Saturday, July 28: Beloit Farmers Market. Shifts are 8 to 10:30 or 10:30 to 1. We're looking for one or two people per shift to help give out free seeds, make seed bombs with children and talk to people about gardening. Contact Mary Thompson, mastergardener-mary@gmail.com for information or to volunteer.

Seed Saving Basics talk for August 9 and 11. Want to help develop and/or give a one-hour talk on the fundamentals of seed saving? Talks will be at the Edgerton (August 9, 6:30 p.m.) and Clinton libraries (August 11, 10:30 a.m.) Contact Ruth Flescher: yafello2@gmail.com.

Composting Talk for October 2. Several MGVs have committed to giving a 1 1/2-hour talk on composting at Hedberg Public Library on October 2 at 6:00 p.m. We're using the presentation developed for the Master Composters but would like to make it as "real life" as possible. We could use help developing the "live" aspects of the presentation and help demonstrate (or talk) at the presentation. Contact Ruth Flescher, yafello2@gmail.com or Mary Thompson, mastergardenermary@gmail.com.

Ongoing: Newsletter Contributor. We'd like to start two features for this newsletter: 1. something along the lines of "Get to Know Other MGVs." This would involve contacting other MGVs to interview (and possibly photograph) them, then write up a short biography. Schedule can be flexible. 2. Book Reviews: Read and comment briefly on the value of garden books. Do it once or do it regularly. Up to you. Contact Ruth Flescher: yafello2@gmail.com.

July Education Calendar

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

UWA = UW Arboretum, Madison; MPL & MGG = Milton Public Library and the Milton Garden Guild; WHPS = WI Hardy Plant Society, Madison; KA = Klehm Arboretum, Rockford, IL; UWW = UW Whitewater; OBG = Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison; ACG = Allen Centennial Garden, Madison; WCMG = Walworth County Master Gardener Association, Lake Geneva; WEC = Welty Environmental Center, Beloit; AJG = Anderson Japanese Garden, Rockford, NATC = Nature at the Confluence, South Beloit, IL; MFAI = Michael Fields Agricultural Institute, East Troy.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 A Prairie Birthday UWA	2	3	4	5	6	7 Garden Tour to support proposed Children's Garden MPL & MGG/ Identifying Summer Prairie Flowers UWA/ Doing Daylilies from Planting to Bloom WHPS/ Pollinator Walk KA/ Prairie and Nature Preserve Tour UWW
8 Rain date only: Garden Tour to support proposed Children's Garden MPL/Prairies and Savannahs on the Grady Tract UWA/ In Search of Butterflies UWA	9	10	11 Tools of the Trade OBG/Evening Garden Tour on Madison's West Side WHPS	12 3 MGV Gardens RPMGA	13 Home Garden Tour OBG	14 Wild Edible and Poisonous Plants Walk RBG/Home Garden Tour OBG/Day Lilies and Drag Queens ACG/ Tour Rich's Foxwillow Pines Nursery WCMGA

15 A Curtis Prairie Tale UWA/Rain Date only for Wild Edible and Poisonous Plants Hike RBG	16	17 Summer Flowers with Flavor OBG/ Prairie Insects of Big Hill Park WEC	18 From Garden to Vase OBG/Plants for Pollinators UWA	19 The Monarch Kingdom RBG/ Book Club Discussion ACG/ Anderson Japanese Gardens: The Middle and Recent Years AJG	20 Plants and Pop Culture ACG	21 RBG Home Garden Tour
22 Summer Flowers with Flavor OBG/ Have Plants, Will Travel OBG/ Greene Prairie and Grady Knoll UWA/ Insects Galore UWA/ Photographing Flowers by Painting with Light KA	23	24 Summer Macro Photography NATC	25 Late Season Combinations for Pollinators OBG	26 Gorgeous Gravel Gardens OBG/ Masterclass: Integrated Pest Management ACG/ Ikebana AJG	27 Full Moon Hike WEC/Keeping Water in Our Soil Farm Tour MFAI	28 Japanese Summer Festival AJG/ Container Gardening KA
29 Curtiss Prairie Forbs UWA	30	31 Fresh Summer Floral Design ACG				

Looking Ahead to August:

The following events are early in August but require pre-registration in July. Check websites for details. Programs are at Olbrich Botanical Gardens in Madison unless otherwise noted.

Time for Tea Tasting and Walk, Wednesday, August 1, 9-10:30 a.m. or later in the day from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., register by July 25 for either session.

A Garden Stroll with Dr. Death (UW's Brian Hudelson, plant disease specialist), Wednesday, August 1, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Register by July 25.

Pollinator-Friendly Plants Walk, Thursday, August 2, 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. Register by July 26. (program repeated on Thursday, August 9)

Harvesting Fresh Veggies in the Snow, Thursday, August 2, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Register by July 26.

Insects and Spiders, UW Arboretum, Saturday, August 4, 1:00-3:00 p.m. Register by July 30.

Unsung Herbaceous Perennials, Sunday, August 5, 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. Register by July 27.

Create Tropical Effects in Your Garden Walk, Wednesday, August 8, 6:30-8:00 p.m. Register by August 1.

Jumping Worms, Wednesday, August 8, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Register by August 1.

An EEO/AA employer, University of Wisconsin-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title VI, Title IX, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

UW-Extension Rock County, 51 S. Main Street, Janesville, WI 53545