

Master Gardener Update

March 2018



A native bee emerging in spring from a hollow plant stem.



A bee resting after having made it way out of a hollow stem.

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Common Snowdrops.

Mulching - Many beneficial insects and pollinators overwinter in soil burrows as either eggs, pupae, or adults. Examples include the hummingbird clearwing moth, soldier beetles, and many native bees. Covering the ground with a layer of mulch too early in the spring could block their emergence. Hold off on mulching until the soil dries out a bit and the weather warms.

Pruning - If part of your spring clean-up involves pruning woody perennials or shrubs, keep a sharp eye out for cocoons and chrysalises. Some of our most beautiful moths and butterflies spend the winter in a delicate cocoon dangling from a branch, including the swallowtails, the sulfurs, and spring azures. Allow any branches with a cocoon or

chrysalis present to stay intact. You can always cut them back later in the season.

Mary K. Thompson

Rotary Gardens Spring Symposium, March 17, 9:00-3:00

This year, Rotary's day-long spring symposium has three great presenters. Megan Cain of Madison's The Creative Vegetable Gardener will share the simple step-by-step process of building an herb spiral to add structure and interest to your garden. She'll also share how to artistically mix herbs into your plantings, unique and colorful varieties to grow, and super easy ways to preserve herbs for off season use.

Richard Hawke is the Chicago Botanical Garden's Plant Evaluation Manager. He'll speak from his 30+ years of experience about favorite perennials, both old and new.

And Rotary's own Director of Horticulture, Mark Dwyer, will focus on hardscaping in your garden: the uses of paths, patios, decks, fences, rocks and other elements that are also vital in creating and defining a beautiful and functional garden space.

Advance registration and fee required. Registration deadline: March 14. For more info, go to www.rotarybotanicalgardens.org/event/2018-spring-symposium

Rotary Gardens: The Science of a Better Lawn, Saturday, March 24, Noon -1:30 p.m.

Are you looking for a way to have a nicer looking lawn, but don't want to put in anymore time into managing it? Dr. Doug Soldat of the UW-Madison will teach you some tricks and tips for having a better looking lawn, while minimizing your effort, and protecting Wisconsin's lakes and streams. The University of Wisconsin-Madison has had a strong program in turfgrass management for over 50 years and this talk will draw upon the science behind better lawn management.

No advance registration required, but there is a fee. For more info: www.rotarybotanicalgardens.org/event/botanic-talk-science-better-law

RPMGA Event

The Art of Planning and Planting Flower Gardens by Mark Dwyer: Thursday, March 15, 5:30 p.m. at the Hort Center at Rotary Gardens.

Combining colorful flowers is just one part of the equation for creating beautiful and functional flower compositions. Understanding the nuances of the site are important as is an extended understanding of all the transitional attributes of each "ingredient" in your compositions. Utilizing colorful images, we'll chat about how we approach the planning and planting of flower beds and borders at the gardens and will have time for questions and discussion.

Volunteer Opportunities

Master Gardeners have been asked if they would be interested in doing a plan to update the landscaping at the Janesville Women's Club Foundation building. This project involves assessing the current landscaping, developing a plan and writing up recommendations for the group. It may also involve supervising the changes to the landscaping. If you would like to be part of the team that works on this, please contact Mary Thompson: mastergardenermary@gmail.com.

Earth Day at Rotary Gardens, April 21. MGVs have a table at Rotary's Earth Day celebration. Would you be willing to spend two hours helping people choose free seeds, make or use wildflower seed bombs and oversee a demonstration of the value of compost in garden soil? (And just generally talk gardening, of course.) Contact Mary Kay Thompson at 608-322-4800 or by email to mastergardenermary@gmail.com to volunteer.

The UW Arboretum is having work parties on the first three Saturdays of March (3, 10 and 17), all from 9-noon. The purpose is to do restoration work on various prairie/savannah eco-systems. Tools and training provided. See <https://arboretum.wisc.edu/visit/events> for details.

The Welty Environmental Center is planning to restore some prairie habitat. As a first step in that process, they are having a brush removal workday on Saturday, March 10, from 9-11 a.m. See www.weltycenter.org for details.

Did you know?

The week of Feb 25 to March 2, 2018 is National Invasive Species Awareness Week. Mustard and buckthorn and worms. Oh my!

The first weekend of March is Aldo Leopold weekend at the UW Arboretum in Madison. Events include a brown-bag lunch with a documentary about Leopold; a public reading of works by Leopold, including *A Sand County Almanac*; a nighttime walk and a family nature program. Details at <https://arboretum.wisc.edu/visit/events>. You'll also find information about other Sunday afternoon nature walks at the site.

March Education Calendar

NCG = Nicholas Conservatory Garden, Rockford; OBG = Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison; DUWEX = Dane County UW Extension, Madison; MFI = Michael Fields Agricultural Institute, East Troy, WI; WARS = West Ag Research Station, Madison; UIEX = University of Illinois Extension, Winnebago County (Rockford); HHM = Hoard Historical Museum, Fort Atkinson, WI; UWA = UW Arboretum, Madison; WIMG = Wisconsin Master Gardener Program, Madison; RKUWEX = Racine/Kenosha UW Extension in Paddock Lake WI; NATC = Nature at the Confluence, South Beloit

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		Continuing through March 11: In Full Bloom Orchid Display NCG	March 10-25 Spring Flower Show OBG	1 Wisconsin Wildlife in the Home Garden DUWEX/Adding a Tropical Twist to Your Garden OBG	2	3 Seed Saving for Beginners & Seed Swap MFI/ Winter Fruit Pruning WARS/Gardening for Food Flowers and Fun UIEX/ Bugs! HHM/ Pruning 101 HHM/ Majestic Maples OBG
4	5	6 Coping with Sloping OBG	7	8 Vegetable Garden Planning and Techniques DUWEX/Citizen Scientist to PhD UWA	9	10 Plant Propagation Workshop WIMG/Beekeeping for Beginners MFI/ Spring into Gardening Day RKUWEX

11	12	13 Healthy Lawns for a Healthy Community OBG	14	15 The Art of Planning and Planting Flower Gardens RPMGA/ Vegetable Families Pests and Diseases DUWEX/ Adapting to Climate Change in Wisc. UWA	16 Fruit Trees UIEX/ Organic Apple Growing MFI	17 Spring Symposium RBG/Fruit Tree Grafting & Scionwood Exchange OBG/ Marvelous Magnolias OBG/ Pollinator-friendly Gardening UWA
18	19	20 Designing Attractive Native Gardens for Home and Business OBG	21 Beyond the Herb Rack OBG	22 Garden Landscape Design DUWEX	23 Brambles and Berries UIEX	24 The Science of a Better Lawn RBG/ Phenology UWA
25 Wild Up Your Backyard NATC/ Hands-on Hydrangea Pruning OBG	26	27 Common Defects in Urban Trees OBG/Fragrance in the Garden OBG	28	29 Composting and Soil Composition DUWEX Searching for Sustainability film MFI	30	31

Looking Ahead to April:

The following events at Olbrich Botanical Gardens are early in April but require pre-registration in March. Check their website for details.

April 3: Your Garden Can Feed You All Year AND Pet Friendly Landscaping

April 4: How to Grow Beautiful African Violets AND Tough Perennials for Tough Sites

April 5: A Peek Into the Home Garden of Olbrich's Director of Horticulture

April 7: Proficient Pruning Workshop AND Top 50 Plants for Birds in Wisconsin

April 8: Vivacious Viburnums

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