

Master Gardener Update

May 2018

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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>Honey bees feed on pollen and nectar collected from blooming flowers. They also eat honey and secretions produced by other members of their colony. Workers forage for food for the entire colony. They use their tongues to suck up nectar, and store it in the anterior section of the digestive tract, called the crop. They collect pollen by grooming it off the bodies and onto special structures on their hind legs called pollen baskets.</p> <p>Returning foragers transfer the nectar they have collected to younger worker bees who then feed other members of the hive, or process it into honey for long-term storage. They add enzymes to the honey, and store it in open cells where the water can evaporate, concentrating the sugars.</p> <p>Honeybees collect the most pollen during warm, calm weather. Workers forage during daylight hours, but are equally active on cloudy or sunny days. They will not fly in heavy rain or high winds, or if the temperature is too extreme. Workers can't fly when temperatures dip below 50°F.</p> <p>Marla Spivak is a leading American entomologist, and Distinguished McKnight University Professor at the University of Minnesota's Bee Lab. She says we need to provide food for honey bees by planting acres of flowers. "Plant flowers that bees like," Spivak said. "Ladybird Johnson had it right. Plant flowers everywhere. Go to native plant nurseries and buy flowers that attract bees."</p> <p>Sources: UWEX A4142 – Wisconsin Bee Identification Guide (Available online - Learning Store) Xerces.org – (reprint) The important life of bees -- By Debra Neutkens, White Bear Press, 7/19/11.</p> <p><i>Photo of honey bee by John Severns is in the public domain.</i></p>
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Swarm! What to Do When You Find One

As a plant health advisor in Rock County I can count on getting a phone call or two each year from someone who has discovered a swarm of bees on their property. These swarms can be in a tree or shrub, on a mailbox or fence, inside a shed or a barn, or more problematically, even inside the wall of a house.

To understand why bees swarm, you have to understand how bees reproduce. Swarming is a natural means of reproduction and occurs most often in late May or early June. Normally there is only one queen per hive. She gives off a special pheromone that suppresses the worker's drive to make new queens. In the spring, when a hive grows its numbers, that pheromone may not be evenly distributed to all the workers, and some may think it's time to make a new queen.

The workers create queen cells and the queen lays eggs. The old queen then leaves in search of a new home, taking about half of the workers with her. The swarm will fly a safe distance from the old hive and land somewhere to rest – on a car, a house, a fire hydrant, in a tree. While in limbo between homes, scout bees will be combing the landscape for another suitable dwelling. Once they find one, the scout bees will fly back to the swarm and through the dance language, explain to the rest of the bees and queen where their new home is located. And then, off they will fly to begin again.



If you find a swarm, what can you do? On your own, not much. Unless you are familiar with bees and have the right attire and equipment, it's best to leave removal to the professionals. According to information found in [The Wisconsin Pollinator Protection Plan: Best Management Practices for Improving Pollinator Habitat in Gardens and Lawns](#), swarms can be managed if you know why they occur and who to contact when they do.

If you see what looks like a swarm:

1. First, verify that it is, in fact, a honey bee swarm. Take care not to confuse a honey bee swarm with a wasp nest. Wasps do not swarm, though they may feed in groups or congregate if they are blocked from entering their nests.
2. Next, call a pro. If what you have is a honey bee swarm, a local beekeeper may be willing to remove it. Beekeepers can be found through [Bee Removal Source](#), [Wisconsin Honey Producers](#), or [Rock County Beekeepers](#).



3. If swarm removal is not possible or if you have wasps, the [Wisconsin Pest Control Association](#) website has a list of businesses that may offer assistance.
4. Swarms are usually docile because they have no hive to defend, but nonetheless take care not to disturb the swarm until help arrives. When properly handled they can be safely removed without harm to them or to you. Under no circumstances should you use pesticides to control a swarm.
5. If the swarm or nest is found in the walls of a building invasive measures may need to be taken to open the area where the swarm has taken up residence. Make repairs after it is removed to prevent the bees from reentering the structure.

Sources: [Why and How Bees Swarm – PerfectBee.com](#)
[Honey Bee Swarms are Common but Not Dangerous – U of Iowa Extension](#)
[Swarm Season](#) by Jennie Stitzinger: Bee Informed Partnership Blog

Mary K. Thompson



Honeyberry—a shrub for pollinators

Lonicera caerulea

This honeysuckle relative produces sweet, 1- to 2-inch-long, blueberry-like fruits that can be eaten fresh or made into pies and sauces. The shrub grows 4 to 5 feet tall and wide, is generally disease- and insect-free, and is extremely cold hardy (USDA zones 3 to 8). It has proven to be hardy to -55 below zero. Honeyberry grows best in moist, shady soils, making it a good choice in difficult landscapes. Plant at least two different varieties for good cross-pollination. Since the plants bloom and fruit early in the season (sometimes before strawberries), gardeners in cold areas should protect the shrubs from late spring frosts. Many insects, including honey bees and bumble bees pollinate honeyberry blossoms. Even hummingbirds have been known to visit the blooms.

Another invasive pest:

Brown Marmorated Stink Bug

The Brown Marmorated Stink Bug is a growing problem. Symptoms of BMSB damage can vary depending on the plant host. Early-season feeding on developing apples results in a surface blemish that is often referred to as “cat-facing” and makes the fruit unmarketable. Later-season feeding on apples leads to water-soaked or necrotic (i.e., dead) areas that make the fruit more prone to invasion by rot organisms. Unfortunately, symptoms from late-season feeding may not show up until four to five weeks after fruit is placed in cold storage. Damage due to BMSB on other small fruit crops is similar to that on apples, but may also include fruit drop. [A4143](#) [Brown Marmorated Stink Bug Fact Sheet](#) is available at The Learning Store.



Meet Tara Hanley

If you've called or been in the Extension Office this winter or spring, you probably talked to a new person on staff. Her name is Tara Hanley and, along with her other duties in office administration, she will be helping Nick Baker (the Extension's Agriculture Agent, and our adviser) handle the myriad details that keep the master gardener program ticking along. Here's what Tara has to say for herself:

Before coming to the UW-Extension office, I worked for Rock County at the 911 Communications Center as the Administrative Assistant for nine years. I grew up in Edgerton and now live in Milton with my husband and two young sons. I also run my own small photography business photographing children and families.

My grandma taught me to can over 10 years ago, and ever since then, I've grown a vegetable garden. It gets bigger every year, of course, but I spend most of my free time in the summer tending to it and canning. The last couple years I started a few seeds indoors, and that has been quite an exciting learning experience for myself and my children. I'm looking forward to warmer weather and getting those plants in the ground!

I'm very happy to be at the UW-Extension office and look forward to assisting the programs supported by it!

The next time you're in the Extension office, introduce yourself!

Wildflower Walk Canceled

Apologies for the short notice on the 29th. While Mariette Nowak was willing to try again, we've gotten into the busy season. We were unable to confirm that enough people could go on the weekend Mariette was available. So with thanks to her, and to MGVS Nancy Moskal, who worked to arrange the walk, we decided to let this education opportunity go for 2018. We'll try again next spring.



Song Sparrow Farm's Open Greenhouse Sale and Tour, Saturday, May 12, 2018 from 8-Noon

Southern Wisconsin is fortunate to have a nationally known peony breeder and perennial nursery in Klehm's Song Sparrow Farm. Though it is located just east of Janesville, Song Sparrow usually only operates by mail and on-line orders. Once a year, for just half a day, it opens its doors for the general public to visit, tour its facilities, and shop for high-end perennial plants.

To get a glimpse of the goodies, check out the website: www.songsparrow.com. If you fall in love and there's something you just have to have, reserve what you want by placing an advance order for pick-up on the 12th. (Advance orders must be placed by May 6, 2018.) You can still add to your purchase that morning, and you won't face disappointment on what you want most. Sadly, most peonies are only available for fall planting, but they may have a selection of potted ones available at the sale.

The address is 13101 East Rye Road, Avalon, WI. Bring your gardening buddies and meet up with other RPMGA members. We'll gather at Song Sparrow at 9:00 a.m. If you can't make it till later in the morning, come anyway. It's a wonderful event!

Rotary Gardens Spring Plant Sale, May 11-13

Think spring at Rotary Gardens annual Plant Sale! The sale includes compost, a wide range of vegetables, herbs, perennials and shrubs. Links to the lists of plants available can be found at www.rotarybotanicalgardens.org/event/spring-plant-sale-3/

The sale is open to the general public. If you are a member, *and bring your Membership card with you*, you can get a 10% discount on your purchase on any of the four days. You can also purchase a membership at the sale, in addition to online or at the Garden entrance. Location: the sale takes place at Rotary's Horticulture Center, 825 Sharon Road, Janesville. Follow the directional signs on Palmer Drive. Parking is free.

Hours: Friday, May 11, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; Saturday May 12, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Sunday May 13, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Special Members-Only Presale: On Thursday evening, May 10, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m., the plant sale opens for RBG members only. Get first pick of the plants available, get your 10% discount, enjoy light refreshments and take a stroll through the gardens. To take advantage of this event, you must purchase your membership before 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 8.

Rotary Gardens Botanic Talk: Wisconsin Wilts—Lethal Diseases of Elms & Oaks, Wednesday, May 23, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Dr. Glen Stanosz of the UW Madison's Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology will discuss oak wilt, Dutch elm disease and other diseases that kill these native shade trees, and what you can do to protect them from harm.

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 6:30 p.m. Those under 16 must be accompanied by an adult, who is also required to purchase a ticket.

Volunteer Opportunities:

May 5, Janesville Women's Club Spring Work Day: 9:00 a.m. till done. Help advise/supervise volunteers who are working to update the landscaping of this historic building at 108 S. Jackson Street, Janesville. Contact Deb Grams: 608-346-0595.

Assorted Saturdays: MGVs at the Farmers Markets. 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 and talk to people about gardening. Contact Ruth Flescher, yafello2@gmail.com, for information or to volunteer. July 28 is in Beloit. June 16 and September 22 are in Janesville.

Monday, May 14, Jefferson Elementary School 4th Grade Class, event held at Janesville School District Outdoor Lab. 9:00 a.m. till 12:30 p.m. Looking for a team of MGVs to help staff one of four stations for the kids to visit in turn (about 13 kids in each group), talking to them about basics of gardening and plants. If you would like to be part of this event, contact Susan Wood: woodslibrarymedia@gmail.com (preferred) or call [262-510-5554](tel:262-510-5554).

Saturday, May 26, Silverwood Farms Park Pollinator Garden Planting, 10:30 a.m. till 12:30 p.m. Help get plants and signage in the ground for a demonstration garden featuring pollinator plants. Park address is 771 Silver Lane, Edgerton WI. For more info, contact Ruth Flescher, yafello2@gmail.com.

Rotary Gardens. Current opportunities: Spring Plant Sale on May 10-14; volunteer work days scheduled for Saturday morning 8:00 a.m.-noon on May 19 and 30, and Wednesday evening, May 30, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Seed Saving Basics talk for August: Looking for a few volunteers willing to help develop and/or give a one-hour talk on the fundamentals of seed saving that we can give at several of the area libraries in conjunction with the new Arrowhead Heirloom Seed Library. If you're interested, contact Ruth Flescher: yafello2@gmail.com.

Ongoing: Rock County Fairgrounds Educational Display/Garden. Create an educational project that you implement and maintain. You could take over and update the vegetable garden or the pollinator herb garden, or go with an idea of your own. Create educational materials to go with the garden (e.g. signs, handouts). Maintain, weed, water and harvest the garden as needed. Some funding available. Contact Deb Grams: 608-346-0595.

Ongoing, Community/RECAP Gardens Educational Display or Garden. Create an educational display or garden that you maintain for the general public and for those renting plots at the community garden. Some funding available to help cover cost of materials. Contact Deb Grams: 608-346-0595.

Ongoing, CSA Assistance at Community/RECAP Garden. Beginning June 19th: Tuesdays, help harvest and clean vegetables for CSA store OR beginning June 20th: Wednesdays starting at 10:00 a.m. till work is done, help sort and clean vegetables, then assemble into baskets for CSA customers to pick up. Contact Deb Grams: 608-346-0595.

Ongoing, Community/Recap Gardens General Maintenance: Schedule is flexible. Assist with watering, weeding, planting, staking and harvesting. Contact Deb Grams: 608-346-0595.

Ongoing, Saint Elizabeth's (Nursing Home) in Footville: Maintain landscaping in front of building. Add educational features/signage if possible. Contact Deb Grams: 608-346-0595.

Ongoing, Plant Health Adviser online/by phone: From spring to fall, the UWEX office fields calls about gardens and landscaping from the general public. The office emails the question and contact information to MGVs who then contact the caller for more information, and research and respond with possible answers to the query. Contact Mary Thompson: mastergardenermary@gmail.com.

Ongoing or limited, Programming Assistance: Help arrange any or all monthly programs for Rock Prairie Master Gardener Association. The schedule is set for the next year or so, but someone to help nail down the details would be welcome! Contact Ruth Flescher: yafello2@gmail.com.

May Education Calendar

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

NCG = Nicholas Conservatory Garden, Rockford; WCMG = Walworth County Master Gardener Association, Lake Geneva; OBG = Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison; DUWEX = Dane County UW Extension, Madison; UWA = UW Arboretum, Madison; ACG = Friends of Allen Centennial Garden, Madison; NATC = Nature at the Confluence, South Beloit; WEC = Welty Environmental Center, Beloit; AJG = Anderson Japanese Garden, Rockford; UIWC = Univ. of Illinois Extension, Winnebago County, Rockford.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
All month: Simply Spring, the Butterfly Exhibit NCG		1	2 Plant Sale and Aquaponics WCMG	3	4	5 Lilacs and Crabapples UWA/ Family Garden Day ACG
6 Spring Wildflowers UWA/ Magnolias UWA/ Mason Bee Houses NATC/ How to Attract Eastern Bluebirds WEC	7	8	9 Glorious Groundcovers OBG	10	11 Plant Sale RBG/ Plant Sale OBG	12 Plant Sale RBG/ Plant Sale OBG/ Plant Sale UWA/ Medicinal Plants UWA/
13 Plant Sale RBG/ Ecosystem Saunter UWA	14	15	16	17 Perennials for Sun OBG	18	19
20 Plant Sale DUWEX/ World Biodiversity Day Walk UWA/	21 Sumptuous Containers OBG	22 Ornamental Containers Workshop OBG/ Freezing Your Summer Harvest UIWC	23 Lethal Diseases of Elms & Oaks RBG	24 Pollinator-Friendly Spring Plants OBG	25	26 Polynesian Pollinator Party NCG/ Beekeeping ACG

27 Bat Night in the Garden AJG/ Curtis Prairie and Noe Woods Walk UWA	28	29 Water Bath and Pressure Canning Basics UIWC	30	31 Make Your Own Bonsai OBG		
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