

# Eau Claire Area Master Gardener News



June 2021

## Growing Food to Share Presentation Made To ECAMGVA... by Chris Southworth

On May 17, 2021, Margaret Murphy, Horticulture Outreach Specialist for Chippewa, Dunn and Eau Claire counties presented "Growing Food to Share, Food Safety in Donation Gardens" at the monthly Eau Claire Area Master Gardener Volunteer Association (ECAMGAV) meeting held via Zoom.

Margaret shared practical tips on how to set up a donating garden and how to handle fresh produce.



Below is a list of resources Margaret shared with the group.

### Recipes:

- FoodWise Family Nutrition Resources from Extension <https://healthyliving.extension.wisc.edu/programs/foodwise/family-resources/>
- Spend Smart. Eat Smart. Iowa State University Extension and Outreach <https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/>

### Publications:

- *Top 13 vegetables to donate to food pantries*  
Iowa State University Extension and Outreach  
<https://store.extension.iastate.edu/product/14938>
- Infographic of *Growing Together: Food Safety in Donation Gardens*  
Iowa State University Extension and Outreach  
<https://store.extension.iastate.edu/product/15257>
- *Community Donation Gardening Toolkit*  
Iowa State University Extension and Outreach  
<https://www.extension.iastate.edu/ffed/community-donation-gardening-toolkit/>
- *Build a low-cost handwashing station for food safety on the farm*  
University of Minnesota Extension  
<https://extension.umn.edu/growing-safe-food/handwashing-station>

### Growing Together, WI

<https://blogs.extension.wisc.edu/gardenwise/>

The presentation was very interesting and informative. Be sure to join in on the Zoom meeting on June 21 when Eli Gottfried will provide a look at "Hydroponic Gardening." Watch for further details Andy will send out with the link to log into the meeting. See you then.



## Local Master Gardener News

### Changing e-mail? Moving?

If you do, please remember to notify the ECAMGA and the newsletter editor of your new e-mail address and/or mailing address so you don't miss any Eau Claire Area Master Gardener happenings!



Email your new information to Carol Cox at [c7w6c2200@charter.net](mailto:c7w6c2200@charter.net) or notify her by snail mail at 1908 Hogeboom Ave., Eau Claire, WI 54701 (or call her at 715-783-0016 - cell).

### ECAMGA Board

ECAMGA BOARD MEMBER CONTACT INFO		
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MGV

**Bulletin Board  
Postings Stories  
and  
Opportunities!!!**



#### Note:

The ECAMGAV Board minutes may be accessed at <https://www.eauclaireareamastergardener.org>.

### MGV Volunteers Needed - EC County Fair

Volunteers are needed for an MGV booth at the Eau County Fair at on Sunday, August 1. We will be inside the 4H tent. There will be a salsa container garden and MGV Jeannette Chromey will make periodic demonstrations to show how beans develop from seeds.

Volunteers will answer questions and talk with kids and parents. Volunteers are needed 9 to 11 am, 11 am to 1 pm and 1 to 3 pm. This will count for two hours of volunteer service. Contact Judy Mitchell at [jmitchell@pobox.com](mailto:jmitchell@pobox.com) to sign up.



### ECAMGV

#### 2021 Calendar

All meetings during the COVID19 pandemic will be held by Zoom invitation.

- June 21: Eli Gottfried on Hydroponic Gardening
- July 19: Member Sharing Program
- August 16: Dr. Nora Mitchell on Native Sunflower research
- September 20: Diana Alfuth on Prairie and Natives
- October 7: Deadline for Annual Photo Contest
- October 18: TBA
- November 22: Dr. Kristina Beuning on UWEC Greenhouse (in-person tour if pandemic permits)
- December: Annual Meeting and Christmas Party

## Reflections on a Gardener

Gardeners are well acquainted with the cycle of life and death. Each year as we go through the seasons, we experience the excitement of watching the early bulbs and perennials appear in our gardens. We plant seeds and seedling in anticipation of food and beauty. As summer comes into full swing our gardens are gorgeous and/or have plenty of weeds. Fall comes and we see things fade and then the killing frost of winter before it all begins again.

Last spring Steve Terwilliger and I planted our last garden together. When I questioned putting in much of a vegetable garden, he just looked at me and said if I don't garden, I don't have hope. As the year progressed Steve's energy waned but he managed to save his beloved sweet corn from the raccoons and get it harvested. This spring we had a couple of very slow walks around the garden to see what was coming up in the flower beds. The last gift Steve gave to me was that he passed away in the spring. Once again, I can focus on life in the garden and talk with my plants. I see Steve in the trees and shrubs we planted together and think of him when I pick the asparagus he planted.

Steve enjoyed the education and camaraderie of both the Garden Club and Master Gardeners. He always told me how much he enjoyed all your company. I want to thank you for your kind letters, offers of help and your quiet presence during this sad time as I get used to living and gardening without my favorite garden partner and husband.

Ellen Terwilliger



*Photo by Ellen Terwilliger*

## Teaching Gardens by Andy Heren

A few years ago the Master Gardeners replaced the terrible looking shrubs around the Extension office with beautiful Teaching Gardens. There are many wonderful examples of different gardening methods to teach the public that there are more options than the traditional in ground garden. We have many people come into the office every summer and ask questions, or just to tell us how much they enjoy looking at the gardens. In 2019 we held an event for the neighborhood sharing bounty from the gardens and other delicious foods. It was a big hit!



I volunteered to take over the Teaching Gardens this year. While here every day, I am wearing my Administrative Assistant hat, not my Master Gardener hat. I don't have the time to head up the project and give it the time Mary Jane and Carla Peltzl did the year or two before our pandemic summer last year, so I need your help! (Continued on page 5)



## Events



**It is time to start taking photos for our Member Sharing Program in July. Take 1 to 4 photos of a single plant, tree or shrub in your yard and send them to Andy Heren by June 30. At the meeting, you will have the opportunity to share information about that plant with our attendees. Does it like sun, shade, soil, zone hardiness, pest problems, and so forth.**

**SOME THINGS ARE JUST BETTER LEFT UNSAID AND I USUALLY REALIZE IT RIGHT AFTER I SAY THEM.**

**-Unknown**



Beaver Creek Reserve  
S1 County Road K  
Fall Creek, WI 54742  
715-877-2212

### Who is That Singing?

June 16, 2021

9:00 am to 10:00 am

Come spend the morning with Beaver Creek Reserve and learn about birds' songs. This weekly talk will highlight a handful of common birds you are likely to hear this time of year in your own neighborhood. During this one-hour presentation we will introduce you to birding by ear. We will discuss the basics of why birds sing, listen to a handful of bird calls, and share some hints to learning and remembering those songs. Hope you will join me.

Registration required by June 16<sup>th</sup>.  
COST: free.

Zoom Program – Link will be sent via email prior to program starting.  
Contact E-Mail:

[csc@beavercreekreserve.org](mailto:csc@beavercreekreserve.org).



## Bits and Pieces



Photo from UW Extension

***Geum triflorum***, a native North American perennial is commonly called Prairie Smoke, because of the wispy seed heads. It is widely distributed across southern Canada and the central and northern U.S and is hardy in zones 3-7. This prairie and open woodland wildflower in the rose family (Rosaceae) can be locally abundant on upland prairie sites. It is commonly found on shallow and gravelly sites as well as in silty and loamy soils. Unfortunately, it has become rather rare over much of its range, outcompeted by naturalized invaders and eliminated by development. Native Americans used this plant for medicinal purposes. It is a delightful plant to grown in your rock garden. For more information on this interesting plant go to: <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/prairie-smoke-geum-triflorum/>.



Photo by Danna Cox

*The earth  
has music  
for those  
who listen.  
  
Shakespeare*



#### **Deter Ants With Peppermint:**

Peppermint oil is available at most health food stores or online. Using a fine-mist spray bottle, mix 2 to 3 tablespoons of peppermint oil with 1 quart of distilled water or a combination of half distilled water and half high proof alcohol (the alcohol helps keep the sprayer from clogging up and helps better disburse the oil). Shake well. Spray liberally around suspected entry points; pay special attention to areas around doors and windows. Do a small spot test on a hidden area first to make sure the spray doesn't damage surfaces. Spray along baseboards and under sinks and cupboards as well. Drops of peppermint oil can also be placed on cotton balls and tucked in areas of possible entry.

*Teaching Gardens, Continued from page 3...*

This is my idea for this year: Instead of getting volunteers to help with the whole thing, how about we have MGs “adopt” an area. That would be your spot for the season. You are responsible to plant, water, and weed throughout the summer. Instead of watering the whole gardens, you would just have your area.

We will have a workday (soon) to spread some mulch. There are a few problem areas we need to fix. A parking sign was put up that put the snowplow off track, and it hit a couple beds. We have to remove part of one of the brick herb gardens (not too complex). We need to replace the log raised bed, which is rotten. The wheelchair accessible bed needs to be repaired. We can take care of those on the workday unless you would like to come tackle one of them on your own. Some weeding is also needed as they are growing like, well, weeds.

So, are you interested in “adopting” a garden area? Jeannie Chromey and her sister (a Master Gardener from Oregon) planted some kale, onions, and a few other things in one of the raised beds. Jeannie comes by and waters it when needed. That is what we are asking others to do.

In the past we have had tomatoes, peppers, pole beans, peas, flowers. What would you like to plant? There are a couple open areas. In the past I believe we had some strawbale gardens. It may be too late to start that this year. I have plans for a bucket planter that can be put in at least one space.

Are you interested? We are not required to submit hours this year, but you may still report them. Please let me know if you would like to adopt an area and what you would like to plant there. If you would like to come by the office and take a look, please do! I can go out with you, and we can discuss it.

If you aren't able to adopt an area but would like to help on a workday, let me know. I am thinking a morning during the week while it is still cool. I will get a load of mulch and just drive down the sidewalk while we unload. Nice and easy as possible.

If you would like to adopt a space, please contact Andy Heren at [Rcktnut007@aol.com](mailto:Rcktnut007@aol.com) or 715-379-8623. Thank you!

**“Day 12 without chocolate...lost hearing in my left eye.”**

*- unknown (poor soul probably died from chocolate deprivation!)*



Picture by Franki Weinberger

## Sea Kale – a Perennial Vegetable

by Frankie Weinberger

How many perennial vegetables can you name? How many perennial vegetables do you grow in your garden?

If you are like most gardeners, two or three would be the typical number – including the most common perennial vegetables that grow in the North - asparagus, chives, and rhubarb. But there is actually a large number of perennial vegetables suitable that can be grown in zone 4, and perennial vegetables have many benefits.

Perennial vegetables have several advantages compared to annual vegetables. Roots grow deeper, resulting in higher mineral content, and there is less need to water plants in dry spells since they more easily access water deep below the surface. Because roots are left intact for years, a favorable symbiotic relationship develops with soil fungi and microbes and is not disrupted every year like annual plants. Perennial plants do not need replacing every year, which saves the cost of new seeds and seedlings. Soil remains covered which promotes carbon sequestration. In addition, growing perennial vegetables is like discovering long-forgotten culinary treasures.

Let's take a look at one of these forgotten historical treasures – sea kale (*cramba maritima*). Like common annual kale, sea kale is in the cabbage or brassica family. But with sea kale you will be in for some wonderful surprises for the senses – from its seemingly miraculous appearance in early spring, to the massive bouquet of silver bluish-grey leaves and abundant white flowers, to the delightful flavors of flower buds, flowers, leaves, roots, and shoots, to the sweet honey-scented flowers attracting bees.

Sea kale is native to the seacoasts of Europe and Great Britain and was domesticated and became quite popular there in the 1700s. Thomas Jefferson planted sea kale at Monticello in 1809. In his 1815 Garden Calendar, Jefferson recorded harvesting sea kale from April 1-28. Shoots can be blanched for mild, delicate flavor. Another entry in 1821 recorded ordering 500 “earthen pots for covering plants of Sea Kale” from a pottery near Richmond, VA.

Sea kale grows in USDA Zones 4-8 and prefers full sun in well-drained soil. It is a clumping vegetable and grows 3 feet wide and high. It can be propagated from root cuttings ½” x 4” or seeds that have been scarified or had the shell removed. It takes one to two years to establish a mature plant, so typically harvesting should wait until the second or third year.

There are very few problems with pests and diseases, but occasional cabbage moths have been reported. As a coastal plant, sea kale appreciates seaweed as a fertilizer.

All parts of sea kale are edible, including flowers, flower buds, leaves, roots, and shoots. Sea kale can be eaten raw or cooked. Like many perennial vegetables, the flavor can be more intense than annuals. Shoots and leaves can be blanched with an earthen pot to prevent a bitter, pungent flavor that can be found in more mature plants. However, this is a matter of personal preference. Leaves can be steamed like collards. Flowers and flower buds make a nice addition to salads, and flower buds taste similar to broccoli. Roots and shoots have a nutty flavor and can be steamed and eaten like asparagus. Consider adding sea kale to your collection of unique perennial edibles. Bon Appetit!



**EYE CANDY**



A pretty basket of posies!  
-Pinterest photo

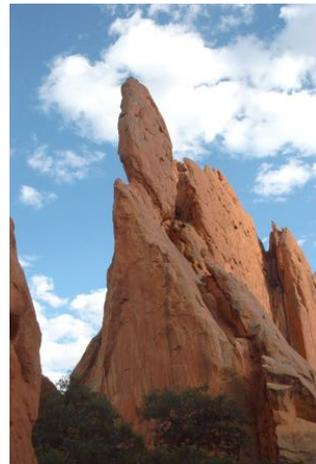


The azaleas have hit their peak and now have gone the way of all blooms to be followed by the iris and other lovely and colorful flowers. But, oh, were they not pretty while they lasted. This azalea is one of the Northern Lights series (I think it might be the one called Mandarin Lights, but not certain).  
Picture by Dana Cox



There is always something to look forward to in the garden, not least of which are the blooms of the lovely foxglove (see picture to the left). While a biennial that must be replanted every two years (or allowed to self-seed), they are indeed worth the effort to keep them in one's garden pallet.

Picture by Dana Cox



Editor's idea of rocks for my garden – just not sure how to get it home!

**Common sense is not a gift. It's a punishment because you have to deal with everyone who doesn't have it.**  
**-unknown**



Wow! What a birdhouse! This is the most recent birdhouse created by Paul Saffert for the gardens he and his wife, Marilyn, have created up in the Rice Lake area. Paul has created many pieces of garden art for their garden over the years including a "horseshoe" stagecoach and team and many birdhouses. Marilyn has spoken at many area garden seminars and events over the years.  
Photo supplied by Marilyn Saffert.



A Crown Imperial fritillaria.

Picture by Dana Cox





**Brugmansia, or Angel Trumpet** is native to Central and South America is as angel trumpet due to its 10-inch-long blooms and can grow up to 12 feet tall. The plants are not winter hardy in Wisconsin but can be grown as annuals or brought in for winter. This makes a spectacular specimen plant on the patio. Brugmansia are heavy feeders and require quite a bit of water. But with good care will result in a small tree decorated with dangling trumpet-shaped flowers. Caring for Brugmansia outdoors requires warm temperatures and a sunny location with protection from the midday sun. Read more at Gardening Know How: Brugmansia Plant Care: How to Care for Brugmansia in Ground

Outside <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/trees/brugmansia/care-for-brugmansia-outside.htm>

Unless otherwise noted, articles for this newsletter are submitted and/or written by ECAMGA members or the newsletter editor, Carol W. Cox. Unless otherwise noted, graphics are from clipart. Newsletter layout by Carol W. Cox



Flag Day, June 14, 2021

For more Eau Claire County UW Cooperative Extension information go to our website: [www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/eauclaire](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/eauclaire)  
Phone: 715-839-4712  
Fax: 715-839-6277  
M-F 8AM-5PM



Happy Father's Day, June 20

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