

# Eau Claire Area Master Gardener News



February 2019



## LaFaive Salves ECAMGs Winter Blues...

by Carol Cox

On Monday, January 21, 2019, the Eau Claire Area Master Gardeners (ECAMG) gathered at the Eau Claire County UW-Extension office in Altoona for the monthly educational meeting. Erin LaFaive, herbalist and former Eau Claire County Extension Educator, gave a presentation on making herbal salves.

LaFaive, owner of Full Circle Herbals, and author of the [Learning Herbalism Workbook](#), gave an overview on how to go about making an herbal salve and also demonstrated how the process worked.

Basically, the components of the salve are an herb infused oil (such as olive oil which is what LaFaive prefers to use) and beeswax. The herbal material should be gathered and allowed to wilt for about 24 hours. Then the material is chopped as fine as possible. If using dried herbs, it still must be broken up into a fairly fine mass. After that the material is allowed to soak in oil until the natural oils and essence of the herb are distilled into the oil. The mixture is then strained (and the plant material squeezed out) through cheese cloth. At that point you have your herbal oil prepared.

Once the herbal oil is prepared LaFaive suggests that the container be labeled with the type of oil used, the method used (quick or slow), the kind of herbal plant material that was used and the date.

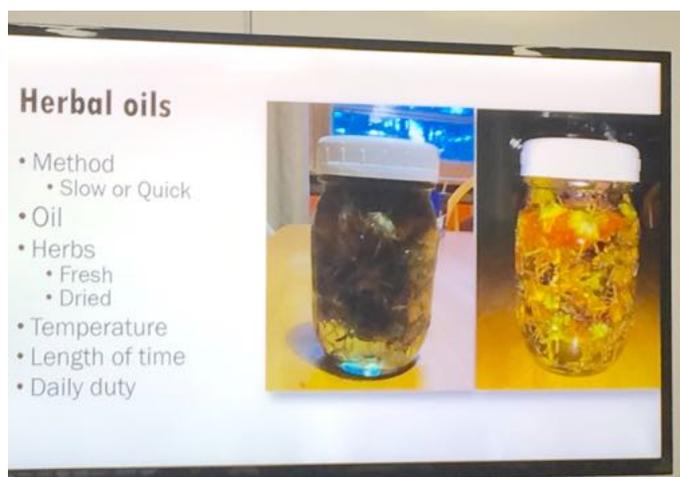
In addition, there are two methods that can be used to make the salve. The first, the slow method, is done by immersing the herbs in the oil and allowing them to sit for four weeks or longer. The mixture of oil and herbs must be checked daily for mold and should be shaken up. Water is the enemy of the herbal oil, according to Erin, and air bubbles in the oil/herb mixture can trap water and cause mold thereby spoiling the herbal oil.

The second method, the quick method, is what LaFaive demonstrated to those in attendance.

With this method a double boiler is used (or a crock pot) and heat is used to speed up the process. Erin cautions though as the oil material should not be brought to a boil as the more oil is heated the more it breaks down. She said that she actually prefers the slow method.

Now one is ready to make the herbal salve. The recipe is simple: 1 cup of the herbal oil, 1 oz of beeswax (finely shaved) and a few drops of Vitamin E plus, Erin adds, about 10 or 15 drops of Lavender Essential Oil.

(Article continued on page 6.)





## Local Master Gardener News

### Changing e-mail? Moving?

If you do, please remember to notify the ECAMG 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).



**MGV**

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

### ECAMGA Board

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#### Note:

The ECAMGAV Board minutes may be accessed at <https://eauclairemastergardeners.weebly.com/ecam-board.html>.

Thanks to all the  
volunteers who  
helped make the  
2019 Winter  
Garden Seminar a  
success. You are  
much  
appreciated!!



### ECAMGVA

#### 2019 Calendar

*All meetings at Extension Office  
unless otherwise noted*

**February 2, 2019:** Winter Garden Seminar

**March 18, 2019:** TBA

**April 15, 2019:** TBA

**May 20, 2019:** TBA

**June 2019:** Annual Plant Sale

**June 17, 2019:** TBA

**July 15, 2019:** TBA

**August 19, 2019:** TBA

**September 16, 2019:** TBA

**September 30, 2019:** Hours due in

**October 7, 2019:** Deadline for MG Photo  
Contest entries

**October 21, 2019:** TBA

**November 18, 2019:** TBA

**December 16:** Annual Holiday Party



## **The Quest** by Judy Mitchell

February seems to be our month for garden seminars. There is Ready Set Grow on February 2<sup>nd</sup> (Eau Claire), Garden Expo February 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> (Madison), and Think Spring February 16<sup>th</sup> (Chippewa Falls). If you attend one or more of these seminars, you are bound to go home with exciting ideas and new publications that will be useful to you as an MG. Learning Store publications may seem a little dull by comparison.

One way to approach the Learning Store is with a specific question, such as the one I had last summer about pests on my blueberry plants. You can use the Learning Store search feature to quickly find answers. Another way to approach the Learning Store is to simply look for one that interests you.

In order to find a publication to feature in The Quest this month, I looked for a publication on a topic that is seldom featured at garden seminars. What I found was UWEX Lawn & Garden Publication A3435, Lawn Maintenance (available at <https://learningstore.uwex.edu> ).

Yes, lawn maintenance is rather a dull topic. And I admit that there are a lot of homeowners with little interest in their lawn. They simply hire a lawn service (or their association does) to keep the lawn green. As MGs, we should know the basic requirements for maintaining a healthy lawn. My suggestion is to review Publication 3435 annually.

Publication 3435 is an eight-page publication packed with useful information starting with proper mowing height, frequency and methods. The section on fertilizer offers plans for low, medium and high maintenance lawns, and it tells you what to expect of your lawn based on the plan you follow. There is a table showing the best seed selection for those who want to get the most out of a low maintenance lawn. Common weed, disease and insect pests are covered.

I found lots of common-sense suggestions in Publication 3435 for improving my lawn. I can add nitrogen to my lawn by simply leaving the grass clippings in place when I mow. I should use less fertilizer in shaded areas. And I should not keep running the sprinkler if the water starts to run off the lawn. It is better to turn the sprinkler off and water again in a day or two. As far as weeds are concerned, it appears the best way to deter them is to have a healthy lawn.

Enjoy those garden seminars, but don't forget about the lawn.

## Events



### **Ninth Annual "Spring Begins!" Seminar Dunn County Master Gardener Association**

**Saturday, March 2, 2019**

**Dunn County Community Services Building,  
3001 U. S. Hwy 12 East Menomonie  
(remodeled Dunn County Health Care Center)**

**9:00 am—12:00 pm**

Seminar cost is **\$8.00** if registration is post-marked by February 22, 2019.

Cost after 2/22/19 or at the door is **\$10.00 per person**. Fee includes materials, coffee break, snacks and door prizes. For more info & to register, Phone: 715-232-1636 or E-mail DCMGA: [dunncountymastergardener@gmail.com](mailto:dunncountymastergardener@gmail.com)

For On-line: <http://dunn.uwex.edu/horticulture/master-gardeners/>

Event speaker will be Mike Maddox, Director of the Extension Master Gardener Program. Sessions will include:  
*-Hydrangeas for Wisconsin...*, pruning, and maintenance.  
*-Tips, Tricks and Tools for Adaptive Gardening Techniques*



S1 County Road K, Fall  
Creek, WI 54742  
[beavercreekreserve.org](http://beavercreekreserve.org)  
Phone: (715) 877-2212

## Bye-Bye Winter Blues:

February 17 from 12:00 p.m. until 2:30

Come out to Beaver Creek for an afternoon of chasing away the winter blues! The program will start with a 45-minute yoga session designed to relax and renew. Then experience some herbal teas, sample tinctures for mood support, herbal foot soaks and chair massages. Dress in comfortable clothes and be ready to chase away those winter blues. Herbal preparations by Kerri Keirnan of River Prairie Apothecary.

**Registration and full payment due by February 13th. Cost: \$25 members; \$25 non-members.**



**Impact of Light on Plants:** Light plays an important and dramatic part in the growth and well-being of a plant. Different plants have different light requirements. In some cases, failure to provide enough light will result in a floppy, ugly plant (take yarrow, for instance, planted in the shade). In other cases, like spirea, it affects leaf size and the overall size of the bush unless the shrub is planted in total shade (in which case it will not thrive and will eventually die. On the other hand, plant shade loving plants in full sun and they will burn and die.

Knowing what we do about light needs of plants though can also help us to control the plant and, kind of, design a different phenotype in some cases. One example is cabbage. Note the two photos. Both cabbage plants came out of the same 6 pack of cabbage seedlings but note the difference a change in light made. Sometimes it may make for more uses for some plant varieties.



## Classes & Events:

**Saturday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019 from 9:00 am to**

### **3:00 pm-Winter Farmers Market in the**

**Greenhouse:** Support local farmers while shopping in the beauty and warmth of our greenhouse. Beef, pork, bison, honey, produce, microgreens, preserves, baked goods and more! The area's favorite farmers are Down To Earth vendors.

### **Saturday, February 9<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m.: Succulent**

**Planter Workshop**-Succulents are loved for their ease of care and, most importantly, how COOL they are! There are so many different types from which to choose to mix and match in your planter. Allow one of our greenhouse pros to guide you in choosing and creating a wonderful succulent planter to enjoy in your home. **Cost:** Build your own; only pay for what you take home. Bring your own container or purchase one here at DTE.

### **Thursdays, February 21<sup>st</sup> & February 28<sup>th</sup> @ 3:00 pm and Saturday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10:00 a.m. and again at 2:00 p.m.: Hanging Basket Workshop-**

Break away from winter and come plant your very own custom hanging basket in the greenhouse. We will be planting baby plants in your hanging basket; then DTE will care for your baskets until they are ready to go outside. You'll be able to pick up your baskets in May to take home and enjoy. You're welcome to stop in and check on the status as they grow. **Cost:** \$50 per basket, everything is included.

**NOTE:** Pre-registration is preferred for all classes and workshops.

6025 Arndt Lane  
Eau Claire, WI 54701  
715-833-1234  
[www.downtoearth.com](http://www.downtoearth.com)



In shade...  
very frilly and  
no head  
developed.

In full sun...  
got huge and  
produced a  
head of  
cabbage.



## The ECGA Extends An Invitation To The ECAMGAVs To Join Them For Their February 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting



The meeting begins at 6:00 p.m. with snacks and socializing. The presentation begins at 6:30 p.m. (ends at 8:30 p.m.) The event location is at the CVTC Energy Education Center (4000 Campus Road, Eau Claire, WI.)

### HOSTA AND MICROGREENS



**HOSTA:**

John Hager is the very enthusiastic President of the Northern Wisconsin Hosta Society. He has over 1500 varieties of hosta in his collection, an avid collector of the unique varieties and a hybridizer. When he retired 10 years ago, having a background in biology and natural resources

John really started gardening with hosta. He lives in the town of Seymour with his wife, a very beautiful yard full of all his hosta and their companion plants. John loves to talk about hosta and educate other gardeners about them. He will talk about hosta growing, what sports are and what to do with them.

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## THINK SPRING GARDEN SEMINAR



Think Spring Garden Seminar  
Saturday, February 16, 2019  
8:00 am—3:00 pm  
<https://chippewa.uwex.edu/think-spring-garden-seminar/>  
715 726-7950



Win a door prize and visit vendors with garden themed products for purchase! Spend a cold winter day THINKING SPRING, meeting gardeners and learning new things.

**Saturday, February 16, 2019**

Avalon Hotel & Conference Center  
1009 W. Park Avenue  
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729

Sponsored by Chippewa County UW-Extension & Chippewa Valley Master Gardeners Association

### MICROGREENS

Microgreens--what are they, how to use them and how to grow them will be presented by Dr. Dan Czelatdtko. (sa-lot-co), a native Chicagoan who moved to the Chippewa Valley in 1991. He is a doctor of chiropractic and a board certified clinical nutritionist with 28 years of experience.

Along with a passion for nutrition, he enjoys fine foods and cooking. Dr. Dan and his wife, Sue, who is a personal trainer, live on a 25-acre hobby farm. They have four dogs and raise chickens and lavender.

Microgreens has recently become a new passion--originally as a way to get his patients to eat better. He presently supplies seven restaurants plus Just Local Foods and The Coffee Grounds with his microgreen varieties.

Along with teaching Anatomy and Physiology for CVTC, you can find him at any of the many Winter and Summer Farmers Markets educating and selling the benefits of microgreens.



Photo by Jo-Ann Clark



## Bits & Pieces

LaFaive presents to ECAM – continued from page 1...



Photos by Carol Cox

In preparing the salve certain equipment will be needed. This includes:

- Cheese cloth
- A double boiler
- Beeswax
- Herbal oil
- Vitamin E (this acts as a preservative)
- a strainer
- paper toweling to wipe up the spills
- containers for the finished salve
- essential oils (such as the Lavender)

LaFaive also discussed buying the beeswax. It can be obtained already cut up into fine pieces or in the form of a brick of beeswax. The brick is hard to handle and cut up. She suggested putting it in the freezer for awhile and then taking a hammer to it to reduce it to the small pill-sized pieces needed.

After the herbal oil has been prepared simply place the 1 cup of herbal oil and the 1 ounce of beeswax in the top half of the double boiler (or an electric frying pan will also work and a glass to hold the oil and beeswax. This would be treated like the double boiler arrangement with water in the pan and the glass then acting as the upper part of the double boiler). Once the beeswax has melted and combined with the oil the Vitamin E and the essential oil (Lavender) can be added. If the salve is to stiff, add a little bit more of the herbal oil to it. If it is to runny, melt in a little more beeswax. The salve can now be placed in the containers or in “chapstick” tubes (which can be purchased on Amazon, etc. After the presentation door prizes were awarded and treats were served.

### Eat Something Special

In the southern United States, black-eyed peas and pork foretell good fortune.

Eating any ring-shaped treat (such as a donut) symbolizes "coming full circle" and leads to good fortune. In Dutch homes, fritters called *olie bollen* are served.



The Irish enjoy pastries called *bannocks*.

In Pakistan and India, rice promises prosperity.

Apples dipped in honey are a Rosh Hashanah tradition.

In Swiss homes dollops of whipped cream, symbolizing the richness of the year to come are dropped on the floors (and allowed to remain there!).

### Sedums...

The genus *Sedum* is very diverse and has over 400 different species. Sedums grow throughout the Northern Hemisphere and are known by their “succulent” (i.e., water filled leaves and stems and they have flowers with five petals.

The genus ranges from very small, low-growing mats to 2-foot shrubby mound type plants. They are most often grown for their colorful, clean foliage and ease of culture. All of us have delighted in the hen-and-chicks we find in the nurseries and, who has not appreciated the fall color provided by taller varieties such as *Autumn Joy*?

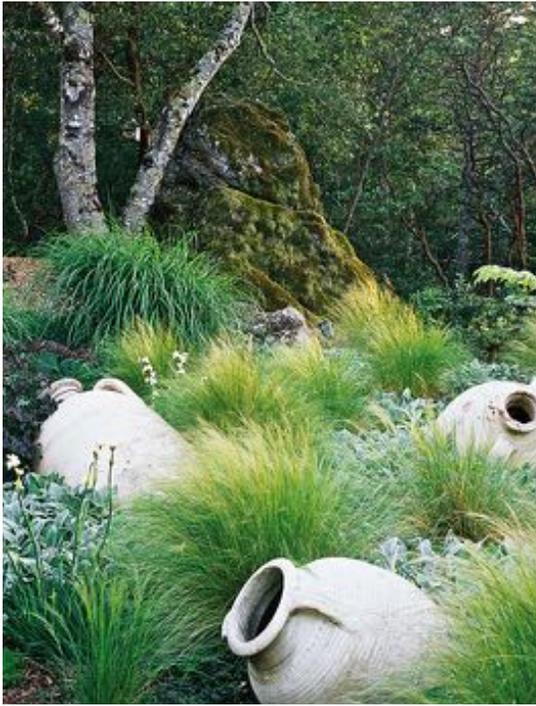
Many have seed heads/flowers that display beautiful fall color. These plants prefer moderately fertile soil in full sun, but can take it drier. Some species may even be able to take some shade. Tip-prune on larger species can be done to shorten and delay flowering.

Sedums can be propagated by taking “softwood cuttings” (basically just stick a leaf in the ground and it will grow with most varieties) in early summer. Divide in spring.

Mealybugs, scale, slugs, and snails can be a problem with sedums.

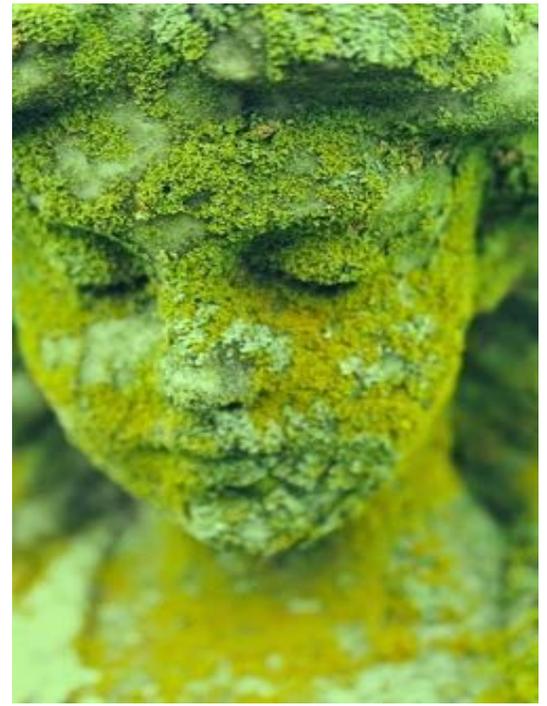
Overall, sedums provide interest and color for our gardens and also attract butterflies.





It is amazing what one can do with an old piece of statuary, a little bit buttermilk and some moss spores (see picture on right).

In addition, 3 of anything laying around seems to catch and draw the eye (see picture on the left).



## Eye Candy

An old (or new) chair can turn into a delightful planter and who can deny the beauty of cactus in bloom (such a contrast between plant and bloom).



Some of my favorite things...moss covered stone, "fairy houses" and fairy gardens! Let the imagination run wild!



It is amazing what strange and interesting creatures we may find in our gardens and along our garden paths.



EAU CLAIRE AREA MASTER GARDENER NEWSLETTER  
A newsletter for the Eau Claire Area Master Gardener Association members.

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



For more Eau Claire County UW Cooperative Extension information go to our website:  
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