



WOOD COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

Wood County WI

January-February 2025

President's Message January 2025

Often times, the New Year brings an “Out with the old, in with the New” vibe. At my house, the holiday treats are out and a bin full of fresh vegetables are in. Boxes of “stuff” in the basement are out, while prepping walls for new paint is in. The temptation to sit still and hibernate is out and a new yoga routine is in.

Looking towards our year ahead, it seems a little funny that what WAS old is coming back new again. By this I mean we are continuing to look at how our activities and events of the past, e.g. Garden Walk, plant sales, social events, and meetings can be tweaked and updated to meet our needs and our mission. A big accomplishment is the reforming of the Community Education Team to evaluate and plan for ways to fulfill our mission of education to the public in new ways that are conducive to attracting people involved in busy lifestyles, but who still want to learn something about gardening. I hope you will look forward to how you can facilitate some of the plans you’ll hear about in the near future.

In the meantime, take a little respite from the boxes, painting, yoga....or whatever you have planned... to enjoy that plant catalog that just came and the NEW that it promises this year. Happy New Year!

Chris



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Education Opportunities for C. E. Hours

UW Extension Horticulture [Wisconsin Horticulture – Division of Extension](#) This site has a plethora of resources to explore. Sign up to receive their monthly newsletter with pertinent topics at: [Sign up](#) It is a great source for getting Continuing Ed credits. Has print and video resources for free use.

No new programs scheduled for 2025 yet.. If you need Continuing Education Hours, go to [Online Programs Archive – Wisconsin Horticulture](#) to view many of the recorded programs This is a good way to get your Ed hours while there is little gardening to do.

From the Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic The Clinic will sponsor a Zoom presentation on a plant disease-related topic each month. To register for one or more talks, go to [2025 PDDC Monthly Disease Talk Registration Form | Plant Disease Diagnostics Clinic](#)

Top Ten Plant Diseases of 2024 Jan 22, 6:30 – 8:30 pm
Learn about 10 plant diseases that made a splash at the UW-Madison Plant Disease Diagnostics Clinic in 2024. Diseases include both those that were submitted the most commonly to the clinic and those that potentially had the biggest impact from an economic or regulatory standpoint.

Fundamentals of Plant Diseases Feb. 26 6:30 - 8:30pm
Learn about disease-causing organisms and the symptoms they cause, as well as information on environmental factors that favor disease development. Also learn about disease-like disorders caused by non-biological factors such as nutrient imbalances, pesticide exposures, environmental pollutants and adverse environmental conditions.

Ask the Experts 1:30 Select Mondays Jan. 27, Feb. 24
Join our monthly online programs in 2025 for an opportunity to connect with plant health experts from the UW-Madison Division of Extension. Each session, held on Monday afternoons from 1:30 pm, is your chance to ask questions about your trees and shrubs, garden vegetables and ornamentals, and lawns, insects, disease, etc.. Registration link: [Free Online Gardening Programs – Wisconsin Horticulture](#)

Want to get better at troubleshooting problems in your landscape and garden?

Plant Diagnostics: The Step-by-Step Approach to Identifying Plant Problems is an online asynchronous course designed to introduce you to the process of plant diagnostics.

Learn the process for identifying plant problems in your own trees, landscape and garden and be prepared for the next growing season! This course explains the basics of the plant diagnostic process in an easy-to-understand way.

At the end of the course, you'll be able to:

- Explain the steps of the diagnostic process.
- Identify appropriate resources to use in the diagnostic process.

Starts Feb. 1 Cost for MG is \$49

Gen Public \$119 Mostly self-paced

After you've finished this course, we hope you feel empowered to attempt diagnostics with your own plants using the framework you'll learn in this course, accessing the resources we'll share with you, and using UW-Madison Division of Extension diagnostic services and labs for extra help when you need it. This is an in-depth course expanding on our Nov meeting program. Excellent resources! To register: [Wisconsin Extension Master Gardener Verification for Plant Diagnostics 2025](#)

Melinda Myers Programs

Organic Insect Pest Management for Vegetable and Flower Gardens Feb. 12 6:30pm

Grow beautiful and productive gardens with your health, pollinators, wildlife and the environment in mind. Melinda will cover strategies for helping you reduce the risk of insect problems by working with nature, selecting the right plants for your garden and providing proper care. Then she'll cover organic strategies to help you manage problems when they arise. Sponsored by Summit Responsible Solutions. Register: [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

Strategies for Managing Invasive Plants Feb. 19 6:30pm

Presented by Melinda Myers. Sponsored by University of Wisconsin-Madison Extension, Aquatic Invasive Species Outreach. Managing invasive plants on your property can be overwhelming. We will discuss a variety of strategies to help you manage these unwanted plants. Preventing their introduction into your landscape is the best place to start. Then slow the spread of those that are present by cutting back the plants or mowing at key times to prevent reseeding. Removing unwanted plants through manual, mechanical and if needed chemical means and proper disposal will also be covered. Register: [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

Create a Beautiful Shade Garden Feb. 26 6:30pm

Presented by Melinda Myers. Don't let limited sunlight stop you from growing a beautiful garden. Melinda will share a variety of shade-tolerant annuals, perennials, and shrubs to brighten those shady spots with color, texture, seasonal interest, and pollinator appeal. Learn about new introductions and traditional shade garden favorites. Sponsored by Diggers Hotline and hosted by Milwaukee Public Library. Register: [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

Grow Pollinator-friendly Spring & Summer Flowering Bulbs Mar. 12 6:30pm

Spring flowering bulbs like grape hyacinths, crocus, daffodils, hyacinths, and alliums provide welcome color and food for pollinators in our late winter and spring gardens. Keep the beau Mar. 12 6:30pmty going throughout the summer and into fall with summer bloomers like gladiolas, hardy lilies, cannas and dahlias. We'll discuss the best bulbs for your growing conditions, tips on keeping them looking their best, and methods for overwintering those that are not hardy in your area. Sponsored by Longfield Gardens Register: [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

Be a Waterwise Gardener Mar. 19 6:30pm

Too much or not enough water and never at the right time. This seems to be the complaint of every gardener. We'll take an in-depth look at ways to minimize water use, keep water where it falls, and efficient ways to water plants when needed. Gardening expert and author Melinda Myers will provide an in-depth look at many of the drought-tolerant plants and ways to manage those that need a bit more moisture. Melinda will share the benefits of incorporating rain barrels and rain gardens into your landscape and using drip and clay pot irrigation and other water-efficient devices. You'll learn how to manage this precious resource as you grow a beautiful landscape. Sponsored by Summit Responsible Solutions. Register: [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

Garden Guru Jan. 23 6pm Marshfield Public Library Winter Sowing Workshop
Make and take your own winter sowing project at this workshop!

Let's Get Green and Growing

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, March 22nd, 2025

8:45 am to 2:45 pm

Rio High School

411 Church Street, Rio

- **Keynote speaker**
- **24 interactive morning and afternoon breakout sessions to appeal to a broad range of gardeners**
- **Vendor market**



Presented by:

Columbia County Master Gardener Association



Save the Dates 2025

Spring Plant Sale

May 17th
930 Westport Drive
Port Edwards

Featuring:

- Annuals, Natives, Perennials
- Seeds & Vegetables Starters
- Garden Walk tickets
- Bake Sale
- “Ask a Master Gardener” Booth

22nd Annual
Garden Walk
Saturday, July 19th
Stay tuned for more details!

Fall Plant Sale

September 13-14
Maple Fall Fest
at Wildwood Park
Marshfield

Featuring:

- Houseplants, Natives, Perennials
- Dried Arrangements
- Garden Accessories & Art
- “Ask a Master Gardener” Booth

**All event proceeds support Wood County Master Gardener beautification and educational projects.*

Plant Sale Information

The work of growing plants has fallen on a few people in the past. Please consider joining forces with the few to increase the number of plants at the sales and decrease the items we have to buy. Then there is the problem of what to do with purchased plants that do not sell. Spring annuals cannot be held until fall because their growing season is over. Perennials left over from the fall (especially purchased plants) is a waste of money if no one is willing to overwinter them.

Please consider starting a few extra plants of whatever you are starting for your own gardens to sell at the plant sales. In this way, if everyone has even a few plants to contribute, we have a wide variety and more inexpensive plants for the sales. It doesn't matter if it is bedding plants in the spring or non-native plants. Anything is welcome! Happy growing!

Lifetime Service Hours

One of the fun things about our first meeting in March is presentation of volunteer service awards. The details about the Program office sharing your information with our association are still being worked out, so we need your help. When the ORS is back online in early February, please check your Lifetime Volunteer Service hours as listed on your ORS dashboard and email that number to Chris Grimes by [March 1](#). The number should be volunteer hours (but not continuing education time) you accrued through [December 31](#), 2024, so **be sure to note the number before you enter any volunteer hours for 2025.**

WIMGA Corner

Wisconsin Master Gardener Association Annual Meeting (WIMGA) was held on January 13, 2025. Beside some usual business transactions annually required, WIMGA hosted Doug Tallamy speaking on **Nature's Best Hope**. An advocate of planting native plants, shrubs and trees, he is also co-founder of the Homegrown National Park system. The annual meeting and Doug's message were recorded and will be available on the WIMGA website in the near future. Members can include his presentation for CE credit.

WIMGA is sponsoring an additional zoom presentation by Doug Tallamy on Tuesday, February 4 at 6:30 PM, titled **Homegrown National Parks**. His concept is that we can all help create a healthy, diverse eco-system in our home landscapes that can collectively become the equivalent of a national park. The zoom presentation is free to WIMGA members. Registration is required in advance so people can be included in the zoom connection. Non-WIMGA members will be charged \$10. It's a great opportunity for you to add more CE credits toward future re-certification.

On Boarding-Lite 2025 is now available on the CANVAS website. You should have recently received this notice from the Master Gardener program via e-mail. All certified MG'ers should check out this information that keeps you updated on the MG program and reminds members of important policies that help maintain membership. The e-mail provides a link to get you to CANVAS. There are also step-by-step instructions on the WIMGA website to do the same.

Calendar of Events

Now Review changes you received to Onboarding Lite by email

Jan 22 Top Ten Plant Diseases of 2024—Hudelson 6:30pm

Jan 23 Garden Guru 6pm Mfld Library Winter Sowing Workshop

Jan 27 Ask the Experts 1:30pm

Feb 1 Start of Plant Diagnostics Course

Feb 4 Doug Talamy "Homegrown National Parks 6:30pm

Feb 7-9 WI Garden Expo in Madison

Feb 12 Melinda Myers Program 6:30pm Organic IPM

Feb 19 Melinda Myers 6:30pm Managing Invasive Plants

Feb 24 Ask the Experts 1:30 pm

Feb 26 Melinda Myers 6:30pm Beautiful Shade Gardens

Feb 26 Fundamentals of Plant Diseases—Hudelson 6:30pm

Mar 12 Melinda Myers 6:30pm Pollinator Friendly Bulbs

Mar 19 Melinda Myers 6:30pm Waterwise Gardener

Mar 22 Let's Get Green and Growing—Columbia County

January-February Garden Guide

Taken from Melinda Myers website

- Start a garden journal to record new plants added to the landscape, successes, challenges and extreme weather conditions. Include any other information that will help in future planning and maintenance of your landscape.
- Water containers overwintered in an unheated garage or mulched in above ground whenever the soil is thawed and dry. Or shovel a scoop of salt-free snow on the pot to water the soil as it melts.
- Start planning for new additions to your flowerbeds. Review pictures of your garden and notes in your journal to help with planning.
- Inventory leftover seeds, create a list of additional seeds you want to purchase, and place your order early for the greatest selection.
- Gather then purchase any containers, sterile seed starting mix, seeds, lights and other equipment needed for starting your own plants from seeds indoors.
- Create a seeding chart for recording plant names, starting dates and other important information. This will help you stay on schedule for planting indoors and out.
- Eliminate the need for lights and daily watering with winter sowing. Start seeds of cool weather annual flowers and vegetables as well as hardy perennials with this method.
- Check on dahlias, cannas and any other bulbs overwintering indoors. Discard any soft, discolored or rotting bulbs. Move sprouted bulbs to a cooler, dark location.
- Continue to minimize salt damage to plants by shoveling first and then applying a plant-friendly deicing salt to walks and drives.
- Recycle your Christmas tree and greens in your landscape. Prune branches off the tree and use the greens for a winter mulch.
- Check for tracks and other signs of vole damage in your perennial gardens and mixed borders. These critters, also called meadow mice, may start nibbling on fleshy roots of perennials like daylily, Siberian iris, and hosta.
- Minimize foot and avoid equipment traffic on dry or frozen grass.
- Make sure animal fencing is secured, replenish repellents as needed and alternate scare tactics to minimize wildlife damage.
- Water containers overwintered in an unheated garage or mulched in above ground whenever the soil is thawed and dry. Or shovel a scoop of salt-free snow on the pot to water the soil as it melts.
- Protect newly planted evergreens from winter winds and sun with a temporary screen of burlap, snow fence or a discarded Christmas tree.
- Remove and destroy egg masses of harmful insects, like tent caterpillars, gypsy and tussock moth. Prune out black knot and other cankers, disinfecting your tools between cuts.
- Check on starting some flowers from seeds indoors. Follow packet directions for planting times. Use clean containers and sterile seed starting mix. Avoid overwatering to prevent damping off.



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The Wood County Master Gardener Association is a non-profit organization with a mission to educate and share information with its members and the community alike. In addition, it is our charge to promote the UW Extension from which we are founded. We are a diverse group interested in the latest research-based horticultural information.

Future Article Submissions

Please send items for inclusion in the newsletter by the 25th of the previous month to: streiffonclay@tds.net

Wisconsin Master Gardener Website:

<https://mastergardener.extension.wisc.edu/>

Wood County Extension Website:

<https://wood.extension.wisc.edu/>

Wood County Master Gardener Association Website:

<https://wood-county-master-gardeners.org/>

WIMGA Website:
<https://www.wimga.org>

Reminders

- If you need continuing education hours, see page 2-4. Now is a great time to earn Ed hours while you can't garden outside.
- Start slips of houseplants for 2025 plant sales.
- Start slips of overwintered plants for 2025 plant sales.
- Start extra plants when you start seedlings for your garden. Send extras to the plant sale.
- Start winter sown plants. If you need help or supplies, call Jill or Donna.
- Collect and dry material for dried arrangements for fall plant sale before storms flatten plants.