

Illinois Master Gardener IMAGINE

INFORMATION ♦ NEWS ♦ EDUCATION



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COORDINATORS' COMMENTS

Congratulations to all the 2012 Outstanding Master Gardeners and Sustained Excellence Award winners as well as to all those volunteers who participated in our ten Teamwork Award winning projects. Please read about our winners in the pages of this newsletter. Also a big thanks to the McHenry and Lake County Master Gardeners for an outstanding conference with over 350 participants.

I have had questions recently about potentially poisonous plants being brought into Extension offices by clients. Some of these plants will cause skin irritations and other potential problems and you should exercise caution when handling any plants that you are unfamiliar with. Candace Miller, Horticulture Educator from Units 1 and 2 has written an information sheet on plants that cause skin irritations and the procedure for Master Gardeners to use when working with potentially dangerous plants.

Procedure for Avoiding Skin Irritations

Always Wear Gloves!

- If an unidentified plant comes into the office that resembles something you may think to be a poisonous plant, wear disposable gloves. This is especially important if it has tri-foliolate leaves or resembles a member of the Carrot family.
- If out in the field looking at a plant, wear a long-sleeve shirt, and long pants. Wear work shoes or boots. Do not wear open-toed shoes or sandals. Again wear gloves.
- Never burn plants that may be toxic. Toxins can be present in the smoke which may be inhaled.
- Place the unwanted plant specimens in a plastic bag and dispose of properly in the garbage where no one else can come in contact with them.

If you touch a poisonous plant, treat the affected area immediately.

- o Wash the area thoroughly with soapy water as soon as possible.
- o After handling plants, always wash your hands and other exposed skin before eating, drinking, smoking, or going to the bathroom.
- o Wash any area that the plant may have come in contact with grease fighting soap and water.
- o Wash your clothes separately in hot water. Clean your shoes with rubbing alcohol and water.

Call the Illinois Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 if you think someone has touched or eaten a dangerous plant and you need to know more about the potential toxicity concerns. Do not wait for the person to feel, look, or get sick. You can call 24 hours a day to get free advice about poison safety and treatment.

Poisonous plants include poison ivy, poison oak and poison sumac. **Allergic plants** include orchids, tulip bulbs, chrysanthemums and dahlias. **Skin irritant plants** include poinsettias, pencil cactus, daffodils, hyacinths and buttercups.

Photo dermatitis plants include members of the Carrot family like poison hemlock, Queen Anne's Lace, wild parsnip and giant hogweed. The Rue family and the mulberry family also have some culprits including garden rue, gas plant and fig trees. **Stinging plants** have nettles and of course plants like roses, locust and raspberries have **thorns or thorny-like appendages**.

Another good resource can be found at http://northernwoodlands.org/articles/article/avoiding_rash_decisions

Monica David, University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener Coordinator

2012 ILLINOIS TEAMWORK AWARD WINNERS

THE PETERSON GARDEN PROJECT (COOK COUNTY)

The Peterson Garden Project (PGP) is a truly innovative approach to community gardening. In just two short years the PGP has blossomed from a grassroots victory garden revitalization to the largest community gardening project in Chicago. The project started in 2010 as a single community garden and has now developed into an award winning, integrated community outreach project that encompasses 8 sites and 3000 participants. The PGP accomplishes its goals thru an exceptional organizational structure and multi-media community outreach strategy; a focus on education and food accessibility and dedication to historic preservation and revitalization. PGP won consecutive awards in 2010 and 2011 in the Chicago Mayor Daley's Landscape awards. The project has formed partnerships with Chicago Public Schools, Seed Saver's Exchange, Coalition for Limited English Speaking Elderly, Jewish Child and Family Services, Square Foot Gardening Foundation and others.

ALZHEIMER'S GARDEN AT THE REHAB AND NURSING CENTER (DEKALB COUNTY)

The Alzheimer's Garden is an enclosed fenced area, approximately 8000 square feet in size, and is located just outside two residential wings and the dining area of the Alzheimer's unit of the DeKalb County Rehab and Nursing Center. Landscaping surrounds a central water feature and the sidewalk leading to it. Also, there are two raised beds where residents grow flowers and vegetables as part of their activities. The Alzheimer's wing of the facility is home to 38 residents who along with hundreds of family members, enjoy the garden each season. The garden offers residents an opportunity to explore nature, activate senses, and experience normalcy in a therapeutic setting. In addition, the center has family outings in the garden, where groups of 100 or more gather to cook, play games, and browse the plantings. The garden was featured in a front page article of The Daily Chronicle in the summer of 2011 and went out on the AP wire to Decatur, IL, Tallahassee, FL and Park City, Utah.

GARDENING YEAR ROUND AT THE COUNTY CONVALESCENT CENTER (DUPAGE COUNTY)

The Master Gardeners began their involvement with the Convalescent Center in 2009. They help residents tend their 6' garden plots as most have limited use of their hands and are wheelchair bound. Nine wheel-chair accessible raised beds totaling over 700 square feet are in use. The volunteers assist residents with plant selection, planting and tending the vegetables. Some produce is enjoyed by the gardeners and some is donated to food pantries. In 2011, Master Gardeners began teaching gardening lessons each week and the residents complete a weekly quiz on the topic. Points for scores and attendance are used to honor residents at the end-of-the-season garden club party. In 2011, the Master Gardeners in conjunction with the Convalescent Center and the Bloomingdale Garden Club received a Quality of Life grant from the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation for this project.

JONES PARK (FULTON COUNTY)

The Jones Park Project in Canton was created as a community jewel where the public can gather to enjoy the gardens but most importantly to interact with the volunteers and learn about best practices in gardening. These volunteers work with community members, the Canton City Government, the Canton Park District, youth helpers and the Spoon River Garden Club to plan and plant the gardens. Plants are maintained by community teams throughout the growing season. Gardening classes or clinics such as "Bring Your Own Garden Gloves" or "How to Divide a Hosta" provide hands-on educational experiences for all. This project has had many great outcomes including greater awareness about Master Gardeners; formation of community alliances; a surge in community pride and a pivotal spot for local farmers markets and garden walks.

SALEM CENTRAL COMMUNITY GARDEN (MARION COUNTY)

Master Gardeners in Marion County saw the perfect opportunity to change a deserted vacant lot into a community garden. The volunteers partnered with the city council, city manager and mayor to make this garden a reality. In 2010 a fence, raised beds and an archway were constructed and the garden was separated in 32 plots for community members to garden and 7 herb boxes. Community members and Master Gardeners worked side by side to create the garden. This venture is also a Plant-A-Row garden where those who tend a plot donate some of their produce to the local food pantry. About \$12,000 has been donated to the community in the form of fresh produce. The Master Gardeners are working on receiving certification for the garden as an Illinois Certified Herb Garden. This garden is being used as a model for other community gardens in the area and has fostered a desire by surrounding communities to create their own community gardens. This project is truly a "Step Forward for the Community".

FRIENDS FIRST (MCLEAN COUNTY)

The Friends First Garden was created three years ago to meet the needs of developmentally disabled adults who were displaced with the closure of the Occupational Development Center. Master Gardeners were asked to teach lessons so that the participants would have the knowledge and skills to build gardens in their own group homes. This team of 20 volunteers worked with the participants to design the garden, prepare the soil, maintain the garden and harvest their bounty at the Second Presbyterian Church. Twice each week volunteers conduct programs such as garden design, butterfly gardening, identifying birds, planting pots, flower arranging, garden art and herbs. Kristi Greenfield, the Marc First Coordinator of Friends First states that she sees a sense of pride and accomplishment in the Friends faces after a program. She says there is much anticipation for return of the program each year. This project is a win-win for all.

SPEAKERS BUREAU (ROCK ISLAND COUNTY)

The Rock Island County Speakers Bureau fulfills responds to the needs of public groups looking for university-based gardening information. The calls for services range from a church group looking for a short program before an ice cream social to rotary or other civic club programs to professional development for teachers. The Master Gardeners work tirelessly as a team to fulfill all the requests and present talks every day of the week- morning, afternoon and evening. The Speakers Bureau is a huge benefit for staff and volunteers as it makes contacts with hundreds of people each year. The topics for talks cover a wide range of subjects and the volunteers have the opportunity to share their vast knowledge with the community. In 2011, the Speakers Bureau stepped it up another notch and added lessons from the “Homegrown Challenge” as weekly classes during May and June covering all aspects of vegetable gardening.

THE JOYS SERIES OF HORTICULTURAL EDUCATION (STEPHENSON COUNTY)

The Joys of Gardening program began in 1998 as a program to offer Master Gardeners their continuing education hours. The program blossomed into an annual all-day horticulture education program that is offered to the public by the Master Gardeners. A keynote presentation is followed by a series of four breakout sessions with many different topics to choose from. Many sessions are hands-on for participants. Joys of Gardening is held every February and has 130 in attendance each year. In 2005, the Joys program was expanded into a series of sessions to provide more education to the community. The Spring Joys is offered over several weeks in the spring and is co-sponsored by the Freeport Public Library. Autumn Joys is a half day gardening program held on a Saturday in October or November. All aspects of planning are carried out by the volunteers and this project has increased visibility and educational learning opportunities for the residents of Stephenson County.

ICC SUMMER GARDENING EDUCATIONAL SERIES (TAZEVELL COUNTY)

The demonstration garden at Illinois Central College has been a longtime cooperative venture between Master Gardeners from Tazewell, Peoria and Woodford Counties. In 2009 Master Gardeners from Tazewell County envisioned using this demo garden as the location for a series of educational seminars. Three sessions were offered- Japanese Beetles, Growing and Drying Herbs and Old Roses. Attendance was 45. The next year four seminars were given and local newspapers helped to publicize the events, resulting in greater attendance. By 2011, the program had expanded to eight seminars and an attendance of 170. Classes were offered on Theme Gardens, Butterfly Gardens, Hostas, Ornamental Grasses, Herbs, Moles and Voles, Fairy Gardens and Seed Harvesting and Storage. Visitors were encouraged to visit the garden and collect seeds from their favorite plants. The goals of this project were to feature the Demo Garden; increase awareness of the Master Gardener program; educate the public and utilize the skills and strengths of the Master Gardeners. This successful project won't be ending any time soon.

COMMUNITY GARDENS (WINNEBAGO COUNTY)

In 2010 the City of Rockford Human Services Department received federal stimulus funding to provide grant opportunities to neighborhood groups who were interested in starting community gardens in the Rockford area. This Master Gardener team hosted informational meetings for grant applicants where they provided garden planning and budget assistance in preparation for completing the grant application. Once grants were awarded, mandatory classes for the gardeners included Successful Vegetable Gardening, Understanding Soils, Integrated Pest Management and Basic Food Preservation Techniques. Master Gardeners were then assigned to community gardens who requested mentor assistance to provide on-site guidance and education. In 2010, 40 community gardens received funding and 37 successfully completed the year. Some of the community gardens the team is most proud of include a nursing and assisted living facility, Valkommen, that used 25 Earth Boxes to create a rooftop garden oasis as well as Rockford's Juvenile Probation Program – teaching valuable skills in teamwork, gardening and nutrition. In 2011, the federal funding was once again available and 30 gardens were funded.

2012 ILLINOIS MASTER GARDENER AWARD WINNERS

OUTSTANDING AWARD WINNERS

Doug Antonelli (Mt. Zion, Macon County)	Mary Napolitano (McHenry, McHenry County)
David Arensdorf (Moline, Rock Island County)	Bob Nicholson (Niles, Cook North Suburban)
Cheryl Besenjak (Hoffman Estates, Cook North Suburban)	Ruth Nonneman (Springfield, Sangamon County)
Jayne Booth (Moline, Rock Island County)	Jennifer Orange (Decatur, Macon County)
Phillip Bratta (Davis Junction, Ogle County)	Jackie Paine (Riverside, Cook County)
Carol Cihla (Pekin, Tazewell County)	Steve Petrilli (Springfield, Sangamon County)
Carole Cook-John (Sycamore, DeKalb County)	Jack Pfaffman (El Paso, Woodford County)
Phil Cray (Port Bryon, Rock Island County)	Kathie Pickering (Washington, Tazewell County)
Jill Fox (Hanover Park, Cook North Suburban)	Linda Popp (Woodstock, McHenry County)
Donald Glover (Peoria, Peoria County)	Mary Anne Spinner (Chicago, Cook County)
Janice Hand (Lincolnshire, Lake County)	Nancy Stetter (Poplar Grove, Boone County)
Sally Hart (Cuba, Fulton County)	Don Terrell (Mattoon, Coles County)
Jerry Hossli (Chicago, Cook County)	Pamela Terry (Congerville, Woodford County)
Nancy Jasiak (LaSalle, LaSalle County)	Donna Thiel (Bloomington, McLean County)
Lanny Leppo (Moline, Rock Island County)	Gary Trammell (Springfield, Sangamon County)
Sally Mabbitt (Glendale Heights, DuPage County)	Babs Travous (Bluford, Jefferson County)
Mary McAlvey (Des Plaines, Cook North Suburban)	Lidia Vitello (Elburn, DeKalb County)
Rodger McDowall (Hoffman Estates, Chicago Botanic Garden)	Bob Walzer (Mendota, LaSalle County)
Doris Morris (Lincoln, Logan County)	Mary Whittaker (Brimfield, Peoria County)
Randy Moseley (DeKalb, DeKalb County)	

SUSTAINED EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNERS

Bernadette Bird (Oregon, Ogle County)	Helen Leake (Lexington, McLean County)
Brenda Brown (Sheridan, LaSalle County)	Shirley Metz (Morton, Tazewell County)
Bruce Brown (Congerville, Woodford County)	Mary A Moore (Lincoln, Logan County)
Donna Cothrell (East Peoria, Tazewell County)	Charlie Nixon (Monticello, Piatt County)
Dallas DeShane (Orion, Rock Island County)	Ron Ory (Naperville, DuPage County)
Jaci Dixon (Bloomington, McLean County)	Aileen Sherline (Mattoon, Coles County)
Theresa Greene (Bluford, Jefferson County)	Gail Tanimura (Mundelein, Lake County)
Roger Harfst (Forest City, Mason County)	Rich Tobiasz (Spring Grove, McHenry County)
Carol Killian (Towanda, McLean County)	Bonnie Williams (Peoria, Peoria County)
Shirley Kolbus (Mattoon, Coles County)	Lisa Wrage (Emden, Logan County)
Mary Lou Kuchan (Canton, Fulton County)	

SPRINGTIME IN SCOTLAND-CASTLES, GARDENS AND HIGHLANDS

May 19-June 1, 2013

Join Illinois Master Gardener Coordinator Monica David to explore the hidden treasures of Scotland. We will visit public and private gardens and enjoy the scenery and history of the majestic highlands, mysterious lochs and historic castles. The non-garden activities on this trip include: leisure time in Inverary, Perth and Edinburgh; a day trip to explore the highlands and lochs; a boat trip on Loch Ness to look for "Nessie"; a tour of Edinburgh Castle; a visit to a local distillery to learn about the making of the famous Scottish whiskey and a stop in St. Andrews- a medieval coastal town and the international home of golf.

The trip will feature both public and private gardens- about 16 gardens in all. We will view stunning private gardens such as **Glenarn Gardens**- known for its collection of rhododendrons; **Dochfour House**- ancestral home of the Baille family on Loch Ness; **Glenbervie House**-with its fine Victorian conservatory; **Cambo House Gardens**- best known for its secret garden and naturalistic plantings; **Branklyn Gardens**- the finest two acres of private garden in the country and **Glendoick Gardens** which was recently included in the list of Europe's top 50 gardens.

Castle gardens included on this tour are **Inverary Castle and Gardens**-a Palladian and Gothic-style castle with 16 acres of formal gardens and woodland; **Cawdor Castle Gardens**- with a famous walled garden, year round flower garden and wild garden; **Carthes Castle Gardens**- best known for its colorful borders; **Drummond Gardens**, an exceptional formal parterre garden and **Mount Stewart**- an outstanding example of grand domestic architecture and lovely gardens which include a rock garden, a Pinetum, a kitchen garden and a contemporary garden. The tour also includes a night visit to the **Cruickshank Botanic Garden** led by the head gardener, and finishes with a stop at the **Edinburgh Royal Botanic Gardens**. Check the full itinerary for all the details and garden descriptions: <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/mg/events/default.cfm>

Tour cost is \$3549 per person twin share. Single supplement is \$850. Airfare not included.

Contact Robyn Gulstrom for more information or to hold your spot: rgulstrom@comcast.net or 269-629-9249.

IPM MODULES NOW AVAILABLE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

Do you need more continuing education hours for the year? Would like some updates on newly emerging pests and pathogens? Would you like to try some online education which is free of charge and can be done at your leisure?

If so then the newly released **University of Illinois Extension IPM Modules for Master Gardeners** are for you! Five modules have been released and more will be added to this website throughout the coming year. We currently have modules available on *Spruce Problems*, *Thousand Canker Walnut Disease*, *Brown Marmorated Stink Bug*, *Bacterial Leaf Scorch* and *Sudden Oak Death*.

These modules were created by a team consisting of Kelly Estes, IL State Survey Coordinator; Stephanie Porter, Plant Diagnostic Outreach Specialist; Phil Nixon, Extension Entomologist and Monica David, Master Gardener Coordinator, along with many other support staff. Funds for this project come from a national USDA grant for Consumer IPM.

The lessons contain information on everything from distribution of the pest to identification to management strategies along with numerous photos. Each module is worth 0.5 hours of continuing education. You should complete the module by reading the material and studying the photos, then complete the quiz until all questions are answered correctly and fill out a very brief evaluation. When finished you can print out a certificate of completion.

You may view the modules as many times as you like and use them as a reference for study and answering client questions. However you can only claim the education credits one time. These modules also count towards the advanced IPM training certification.





COSTA RICA 2013

Gardens, Rain Forest, Beaches and Wildlife

January 12-22

Join fellow gardeners and nature enthusiasts to explore the rich diversity of Costa Rica. We will visit private reserves and private and public gardens, while surrounded by rainforest, mountains or the picturesque Pacific Coast. Costa Rica is the land of gardens where you will see some of your most cherished garden plants growing in the wild. The national flower of Costa Rica is the orchid. Costa Rica has the richest orchid flora in Central America with more than 1,400 identified species.

This itinerary is inclusive of almost all daily activities as well as meals. The trip also includes some visits that are exclusively available to a very limited few.

The trip begins in San Jose with lodging at the beautiful Hotel Bougainvillea which features its own magnificent garden. The group will visit the La Paz Waterfall Gardens and the Cano Negro National Wildlife Refuge which is the habitat for over 350 species of birds. Next the group will travel to the Arenal Volcano, Ecotermals Hot Springs, the Arenal Hanging Bridges and the Don Juan Organic Farm. The next area to be featured is the Monteverde region which is one of the most outstanding ecosystems on the planet and where you can enjoy the amazing cloud forest. This group has the privilege of spending a day with Willow Zuchowski exploring her projects. Willow is the author of "Tropical Plants of Costa Rica" and "Common Flowering Plants of the Monteverde Cloud Forest". Lastly the group will visit the sunny beach region of Guanacaste. The last day is free to swim, snorkel, kayak or sail at leisure.

Tour cost per person is \$2990. Airfare not included. The full itinerary and registration form can be found at <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/mg/events/default.cfm> For more information contact Mary Kroening at mkroening@greatsoutherntravel.com

INTERNATIONAL MASTER GARDENER CONFERENCE 2013

The 2013 International Master Gardener Conference will feature an Alaskan Cruise with sessions held on board and tours during port stops. The spots are filling quickly so register soon. Actual educational/seminar and tour information will be available September 1, 2012. There will be a \$200 additional fee for conference registration-but stay tuned for your choices. \$350 per person or \$700 per room will hold the cabin of your choice. The main conference website for information is <http://uaex.edu/imgc2013/default.htm>

Holland America Cruise line – Ship - Westerdam Port Schedule

Sailing from – Seattle, September 7, 2013

Return to – Seattle, September 14, 2013

Day 1: Seattle, Washington, US - Depart 4:00 p.m.

Day 2: At sea

Day 3: Juneau, Alaska, US - 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Day 4: Glacier Bay

Day 5: Sitka, Alaska, US - 7:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Day 6: Ketchikan, Alaska, US - 7:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Day 7: Victoria, British Columbia, CA - 6:00 p.m. - 11:59 p.m.

Day 8: Seattle, Washington, US - Arrive 7:00 a.m.



CANADIAN CONFERENCE OPEN TO ALL MASTER GARDENERS

The first Canadian Master Gardener Conference will be held in Huntsville, Ontario from April 5 to 7th, 2013. Both Master Gardeners from the USA and Canada as well as all other gardening enthusiasts are invited to attend this event featuring speakers and workshops on a variety of horticultural topics. The keynote speakers will be Spencer Barrett, professor and Canada Research Chair at the University of Toronto and Catherine Kavassalis, formerly on the Board of Director for the Royal Botanical Gardens. See the official website for details. www.mgointernationalconference.ca

NEW STUDIES LINK NEONICOTINOIDS WITH BEE REDUCTION

There is worldwide concern about the loss of pollinators during the last few years. Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) in honey bees, in which large numbers of bees abandon their hives, has been present since at least 2006. There has been a large decline in bumblebees noticed in California and elsewhere with a possibility of the extinction of one or more species. These reductions appear to be caused by a variety of stresses making the bees less capable of fending off diseases and other factors. Insecticides have always been a suspected culprit in these declines with neonicotinoids being of prime concern. Some neonicotinoids have widespread use and their systemic activity within the plant can result in their presence in pollen and nectar. One neonicotinoid, imidacloprid, has been heavily implicated. It is known that imidacloprid is incorporated into the pollen and nectar of some plants, but not others. A French study several years ago found that honey bees exposed to sublethal dosages of imidacloprid frequently were unable to find their way back to their colony. Although successfully repeated at least once in Europe, similar studies in the U.S. were unable to repeat these results, making the research suspect. Clothianidin, another neonicotinoid, has also been implicated in bee losses.

Two new studies in Europe published in the digital version of the journal *Science* in March 2012 produce additional concern about neonicotinoid insecticides and bees. The journal *Science* is one of the most highly regarded journals in the world. These two studies utilized high-quality methodology and analysis, making them more likely to be repeatable. One study addresses imidacloprid and bumblebees in Great Britain (“Neonicotinoid Pesticide Reduces Bumble Bee Colony Growth and Queen Production.” By Penelope R. Whitehorn, Stephanie O’Connor, Felix L. Wackers, Dave Goulson. *Science*, Vol. 335 No. 6076, March 30, 2012). Pollen and sugar water containing a nonfatal dose of imidacloprid was fed to 50 bumblebee colonies, *Bombus terrestris*, for two weeks. They were then released to forage outdoors. At the end of the season, the colonies were 8-12% smaller than the 25 control colonies that were not fed any imidacloprid. The colonies receiving the imidacloprid produced, on average, about two queens per colony. The untreated colonies averaged 14 queens per colony. Bumblebees produce annual colonies; the workers and original queen die at the end of the growing season. New colonies are started each year by overwintering queens produced the previous year. Many overwintering queens die during the winter and also in the early spring when they are starting their new colonies. Mortality due to disease, predation from mammals and birds, and starvation from insufficient pollen and nectar sources are common. A reduction in queen production translates into a reduction in potential colonies the following year.

The other research study was conducted in France (“A Common Pesticide Decreases Foraging Success and Survival in Honey Bees.” By Mickaël Henry, Maxime Beguin, Fabrice Requier, Orianne Rollin, Jean-François Odoux, Pierrick Aupinel, Jean Aptel, Sylvie Tchamitchian, Axel Decourtye. *Science*, Vol. 335 No. 6076, March 30, 2012). In this study, 600 honey bees were fitted with electronic identifiers that allowed them to be counted electronically when they returned to the hive. The bees were fed a mixture of sugar water containing low doses of thiamethoxam, another neonicotinoid insecticide. The doses used were determined to be similar to those that the bees would be exposed to in nature. The bees were then released up to one kilometer (0.6 miles) from the hive. The bees were released in areas where they had been previously as well as in areas that were new to them. Only about one-half of the bees dosed with thiamethoxam returned to the hive compared with those that did not receive any insecticide. This translates into less food, pollen and nectar coming back to the hives, resulting in weaker hives.

The source for much of the above was obtained from news articles posted on The Xerces Society web site. The Xerces Society is a nonprofit organization that protects wildlife through the conservation of invertebrates and their habitat. Those articles can be found on The Xerces Society web site at <http://www.xerces.org/>

Although these two studies appear to indicate that neonicotinoid insecticides might be responsible for pollinator reductions, there are other research studies that indicate the opposite. Additional research has pointed at one or more other factors. Insecticide use may be one of the stresses causing colony collapse disorder and other pollinator reductions, but these reductions are apparently due to a number of factors.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE OPENING

The State Master Gardener advisory committee is looking for a Master Gardener volunteer from the Southern (S) part of the state. The term on the committee is for three years and the committee meets 4 times per year. These meetings are usually held in February, May, September (at the state conference) and November. Committee members may attend the meetings in person or by telenet. The state committee is made up of staff and Master Gardeners from across the state. The committee serves as advisory counsel to the Master Gardener State Coordinator. They encourage equitable distribution of state Master Gardener resources; recommend standards for core course training; increase awareness of University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener programs; support the annual conference and recommend policies and procedures for the program. If you would be interested in applying for this opening (you must live in the Southern part of the state), talk to your local coordinator. There is an application form on the website at <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/mg> (on the MG Resources page). Please fill out your application and take it to your local coordinator for their approval. A supporting letter from your County Director, Master Gardener Coordinator or Educator must accompany your application. **Applications are due to the State Office by October 1.**

CAUTIONARY NEWS FOR HOSE DRINKERS

A study released in May from the Ecology Center in Ann Arbor, Michigan revealed that it may not be the best idea to drink from your garden hose. Researchers studied 179 garden tools and products including hoses for the presence of lead, cadmium, bromine, chlorine, phthalates and BPA all of which have been linked to birth defects, impaired learning, liver toxicity, premature births and early puberty in lab animals. Over 2/3 of the products tested contained levels of "high concern". In particular, the water from one hose contained 18 times more lead than allowed by the Federal drinking water standard.

According to the study, polyurethane or natural rubber hoses are the safest choices. Look for hoses that say "drinking water safe" and "lead free" if you plan to drink from the hoses. Letting a hose run for a few seconds before drinking also helps because the water that has been sitting in the hose will have the highest level of chemicals. Try to keep the hoses in the shade because heat from the sun speeds up the leaching of chemicals into the water.

reprinted from *The American Gardener* July/August 2012

QUILT GARDENS IN INDIANA

The Heritage trail in northern Indiana will be blanketed in color this summer and fall (May to October) as 19 giant Quilt Gardens are in bloom. Now in their fifth year, the Quilt gardens are found in seven towns and cover 23,000 feet of land. The gardens range in size from 800 to 2,500 square feet and are inspired by traditional and contemporary quilt patterns.

Mary Ann Linehart-Cross, an Extension educator with Purdue University has worked with Master Gardeners on the design, planting and tending of the gardens since their inception. She says that the plants must be able to tolerate heat well and so heat tolerate plants like marigold, petunias, wax begonias and parsley are used.

From its modest beginnings with just two gardens, the Quilt Gardens have been named a "Top 100 Event" by the American Bus Association. For more information visit www.quiltgardens.com The website also contains a Master Gardener guide to each of the gardens.



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