



Imagine

Illinois Master Gardeners' Information,
News and Education

Vol. 3 No. 3
May- June 2002

Coordinators' Comments

While the grapevine is usually an effective communications tool for spreading news, it's not always reliable. So I'm using this column to officially announce my departure from University of Illinois Extension. I have an opportunity to become garden book editor for Meredith Corporation --- working on all the Better Homes and Gardens and Ortho gardening books. It means a move to Des Moines, IA, which is close enough that I'll still occasionally get back to Illinois. (I've already made arrangements with my new supervisor to return for the state Master Gardener conference this September in Rockford.)

It's been nearly 3 years since I arrived from Missouri, and a lot of changes have happened to the Illinois Master Gardener program during that time. I hope you'll agree that most of the changes have been positive, and that the U of I Extension Master Gardener program is moving forward to greater achievements. For many, change is a difficult process. The current transition to new leadership for the Master Gardener program is no exception. State budgetary constraints will result in a freeze on hiring a permanent replacement immediately. In the meantime, we're pleased to be able to announce that Monica David has been named interim state coordinator. This should provide a relatively smooth transition since she has been closely involved in virtually every aspect of the Master Gardener program. However, do expect some cut backs in the level of service from the state office. When a 2-person office suddenly becomes 1, something has to go! With creative thinking and advice from the State Advisory Committee, we believe all the basic needs of the program will continue to be met.

You have a chance to help shape the leadership and future of the Illinois Master Gardener program. Terms of service are concluding for Master Gardener representatives to the State Master Gardener Advisory

Committee from 4 of the 5 Extension regions (all except West Central). This advisory group plays a critical role in determining policies and program direction. If you're interested in serving on this committee, request an application from the state Master Gardener office. **Applications are due July 15th**, and the 3-year term begins September 1, 2002. The first official meeting will be held just prior to the state conference.

It's also time to think about nominating Master Gardeners deserving of state awards to be presented at the state conference awards banquet. There are 3 categories of state awards: State Outstanding Master Gardener, Sustained Excellence Award, and Teamwork Award. Unit Leaders and local Master Gardener coordinators will be receiving the application forms for these awards. Check with them for details on the nomination process.

Awards nominations are due June 14.

It's been a pleasure working with the extension staff and Master Gardeners of Illinois these past several years. I wish you all continued success in providing home gardening information and services to the citizens of the state. And if you get to Des Moines, I'll see if I can arrange a tour of the Better Homes and Gardens test gardens for you.

 Denny Schrock

National Pesticide Information Center

The National Pesticide Telecommunications Network at Oregon State University has recently undergone a name change to become the National Pesticide Information Center. The NPIC is a national toll-free telephone and internet service that provides science-based information about pesticide-related subjects to the public and to professionals. Visit their website at <http://npic.orst.edu> or call 1-800-858-7378.

Important Dates

May 11: Vermilion County Master Gardener Plant Sale, Vermilion County Extension Office, 8 a.m. till sold out. 217-442-8615.

May 18: Master Gardener Open House and Plant Swap, Washington County Extension office, Nashville, IL., 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. 618-327-8881.

May 26-27: Garden Ramble, Wesley Whiteside's garden, Coles County. Dr Whiteside is a professor Emeritus of Botany at Eastern Illinois University and has created a 5-acre garden featuring habitats such as a rose garden, shade garden, forest garden and sun-splashed beds of perennials. His gardens include many rare and non-native species of plants. Sponsored by the Coles County Historical Society. Contact Renee Henry at 217-345-2934.

May 27: Shade Gardening class. Taught by Vermilion County Master Gardeners. 217-442-8615.

June 4: Native Plants and Wildflowers class. Taught by Vermilion County Master Gardeners. 217-442-8615.

June 16: Garden Walk sponsored by the Champaign Master Gardeners. 217-333-7672.

June 23: Garden Walk sponsored by the Vermilion County Master Gardeners. Six gardens will be featured. Noon to 5 p.m. 217-442-8615.

June 23: "How Our Gardens Grow" Garden Walk sponsored by the Macon County Master Gardeners. Seven area gardens will be showcased. The gardens reflect a variety of styles, which include mixtures of perennials, roses, annuals, trees, herbs, vegetables and container gardens. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. 217-877-6042.

July 11-12: National School Gardening Symposium, Northwestern University's Norris Center, and the Chicago Botanic Garden. The symposium will feature talks on the best practices in school gardening programs, garden-based education curricula, program evaluation, fundraising and administration as well as a report on Chicago's five-year old School Garden Initiative. Call 847-835-8261 or visit the website at www.chicagobotanic.org/continuing/schoolgarden.

July 7-13: Perennial Plant Symposium, Hyatt Regency Center, Rosemont, IL. Contact 614-771-8431.

July 13-17: Ohio Florists Association Short Course, Columbus, Ohio. For conference and registration information phone 800-737-9486 or check the website at www.ofa.org

July 18-20: "Ripe From Downtown"- A National Symposium on Creating Garden-based Entrepreneur Programs for Youth, Cleveland, Ohio. Sponsored by the Cleveland Botanical Garden. 216-721-1600.

September 12-14: State Master Gardener Convention, The Clock Tower Resort, Rockford, IL

September 20-21: American Horticultural Therapy Association Conference, Norfolk Botanical Gardens, Norfolk, Virginia. Check the website at www.ahta.org

June 18-22, 2003: International Master Gardeners Conference, Greater Cincinnati area and Northern Kentucky. Preliminary schedule and information available on the website at <http://mastergardener.osu.edu/imgc2003/>

Deadline for submission of articles for the July-August issue is June 15th.

Garden Calendar 2003



We have received excellent feedback on our new and improved calendar for 2002. We would like to highlight some of *your* photos for the 2003 calendar.

We will need shots suitable for enlargement as full-page calendar headers as well as smaller "filler" shots to liven up the date pages of each month. Slides should be your original work, representative of Illinois gardens or landscapes and plant material should be properly identified. We can only accept 35 mm color slides but you may submit as many different slides as you like. All slides will become the property of University of Illinois Extension and will not be returned to the photographer. Please submit your labeled slides to: IL. Master Gardener Office, 1201 S. Dorner Drive, Urbana, IL. 61801. Submission deadline is **June 1st**.

Advanced Master Gardener Tree I.D. Classes

Do you have trouble telling a white oak from a burr oak? Are you not quite sure what a *Taxodium distichum* is? Then the Advanced Master Gardener Tree I.D. class may be for you. You'll receive 24 hours of classroom and field instruction (that count towards your annual continuing education requirement), learning at least 70 trees that grow in your area of the state. This class will only be available to currently active Master Gardeners. A section of the class will be taught in each region of the state so no one will have too far to travel. You will be expected to attend all six class periods of the section for which you sign up. **Please note that all class periods will involve walking to observe**

trees in the field. Each section will have a minimum of 15 and maximum of 25 students. You'll receive class handouts to help in identifying the trees, a hand lens for seeing fine details of buds and twigs, and on successfully completing the course by attending all six sessions in your section and passing the final exam, you'll receive a certificate and a pin identifying you as an Advanced Master Gardener in Tree I.D.

Cost of the class is \$50, payable to the University of Illinois. **Send registration** to the State Master Gardener Office, 1201 S. Dorner Dr., Urbana, IL 61801 **by June 14**. Indicate with your registration check which section you are signing up for. Dates, times, locations and instructors for the sections of the class are:

Section 1: Instructor – Sharon Yiesla; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; July 15 – Chicago Botanic Garden, July 29 – Cantigny (Wheaton), Aug. 5 – Cantigny, Aug. 12 – Joliet Jr. College, Sept. 9 – Joliet Jr. College, Sept. 23 – Chicago Botanic Garden (all class dates are on Mon.)

Section 2: Instructor – Barb Larson; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; various locations in Rockford and Freeport; June 26, July 10, July 24, Aug. 7, Aug. 21 and Sept. 4 (all class dates on Wed.)



Section 3: Instructor – Martha Smith; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Western Ill. Univ., Monmouth College and Knox College campuses in Macomb and Galesburg; July 17, July 31, Aug. 14, Aug. 28, Sept. 10 and Sept. 25 (all class dates are Wed. except Tues. Sept. 10)

Section 4: Instructor– Amy O’Leary; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Aug. 28, Sept. 4, Sept. 11– Missouri Botanic Garden and Sept. 18, Oct. 9, Oct. 16– Southern Illinois University campus -Carbondale (all class dates are on Wed.)

Section 5: Instructors– Sandy Mason and Beth Smith; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; various locations in Champaign-Urbana, Sept. 4, Sept. 18, Oct. 2, Oct. 16, Oct. 30, Nov. 13 (all sessions on Wed.)

Section 6: Instructor– David Robson; 2 sessions each in Springfield, Peoria, and Bloomington; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Aug. 27, Sept. 3, Sept. 10, Sept. 24, Oct. 1 and Oct. 8 (all sessions on Tues.)

INA 2002 Plant of the Year Selections

The Illinois Nurseryman’s Association created the Plant of the Year program three years ago to inform the public about new, exciting and underutilized plant material. Here are their selections for 2002-2004.

2002 Selections

Perennial: *Anemone x hybrida*- Japanese Anemone

Shrub: *Fothergilla gardenii*- Dwarf Fothergilla

Tree: *Taxodium distichum*- Bald Cypress

2003 Selections

Perennial: *Eupatorium rugosum* ‘Chocolate’- Chocolate Joe Pye Weed

Shrub: *Physocarpus opulifolius* ‘Diablo’- Diablo Purpleleaf Ninebark

Tree: *Malus x* ‘Prairiefire’- Prairiefire Crabapple

2004 Selections

Perennial: *Salvia verticillata* ‘Purple Rain’- Purple Rain Salvia

Shrub: *Hydrangea paniculata* ‘Unique’- Panicle Hydrangea ‘Unique’

Tree: *Tilia tomentosa*- Silver Linden

(*Growing Trends*, January 2002)

Chairman's Chat

Are you looking for travel, excitement, a chance to meet interesting people, an opportunity to share Master Gardening ideas and develop new programs, or additional volunteer hours? Well, how about an excuse for driving through the scenic rolling hills and dales of Champaign County two or three times each year? (OK, scratch that one...)

All right then, what if you're also offered a Free Lunch? Ah, I thought *that* might get your attention!

The Illinois State Master Gardener Advisory Committee is now two years old, and under our By-Laws, committee members serve for three years, with the initial group serving staggered terms of one to three years. This year, there are committee openings for Master Gardeners from 4 of the 5 state regions, everywhere in the state except in the West Central region.



If you've been a Master Gardener for a year or two, and have some ideas as to how the Master Gardening program could be improved or strengthened, please give some thought to applying for Committee membership. The Committee consists of 10 Master Gardeners and 10 Extension staff, plus the State Coordinator, the Assistant State Coordinator, and a representative from the Chicago Botanic Garden. The 23 meet quarterly, once at the state MG conference wherever it's held and the other three times at Urbana (although wisely, this year it was decided that the February meeting would be held by Telenet, precluding the necessity of driving to Urbana in what could be dicey weather). In-person meetings typically last for 5 hours, but Telenet meetings generally are shorter (alas, however, devoid of lunch!).

If you're at all interested in serving on the Advisory Committee, please contact your Unit Leader now for application details. The Committee could – and should – always use fresh ideas.

Speaking of the state MG conference, elsewhere in

this issue you'll see a preliminary listing of some of the program for the 2002 conference in Rockford, September 12-14, with full details coming in the next issue. The various planning committees have been hard at work (Hort Educator Barb Larson cracks a *mean* whip!) and although I've been involved in a small bit of that planning, I can still modestly say that I think this will be the best state MG conference I've encountered since I became a Master Gardener 8 years ago.

On behalf of all the Master Gardeners in northwestern Illinois, we look forward to seeing you in September at 'Masters of the Garden'. You're going to learn, you're going to have fun, and you're going to be glad you joined in!

For a bit of late-breaking news, the Advisory Committee met on April 29th in Urbana, and amongst many other items we selected new officers. Beginning September 1st the new folks are: **Chairperson, Mariellen Griffith** (MG in McLean County), **Vice-Chairperson, Sandy Mason** (Hort Educator, Champaign County), and **Secretary, Diana Husband** (MG in Cook/South Suburban). If you have any comments, complaints, or suggestions about the MG program, they are the folks you should contact after September 1st. Before then, feel free to drop me a line. We depend on you for feedback, and comments I've received in the past have been brought to the attention of the Advisory Committee. I'm confident that the new officers will do the same.

And last, my personal thanks to Denny. In his all-too-brief time as Coordinator of the state program, I think we have made significant strides, and I've been honored to work with him. I wish him well in his new position at Meredith Publishing, but I'm saddened by his departure from Illinois.

(I'm also hopeful that Denny will remember his connections with the Master Gardening program, and that in subsequent years we'll be inundated with year-old redundant copies of books!)

Happy 2002 Gardening, everyone. Spring in northern Illinois has come. And gone. But soon it will be back... Maybe.

See you in September! Dave

Purple Reigns

It's the end of July and a flashy, beautiful, non-native is adding color to the local landscape. European in origin, attractive and dangerous, purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) is roaming the Illinois River Valley. After clogging up many of the wetlands and waterways of the east coast, creating a mess in the Northern Illinois landscape, the run-away plant has arrived on your doorstep.

Purple Loosestrife reached the mid-west in the 1930's following the waterways and man-made canals. After undergoing a period of acclimation it is beginning to show invasive growth here in central Illinois. Because it has such a brilliant, showy, long-blooming flower your first thought may be 'what's all the fuss, it is doing just fine in my garden?'

The truth is, loosestrife is a serious threat to Illinois wetlands, as it crowds out most native vegetation while offering little food or shelter in a given habitat. Monocultures form when large tracts of loosestrife take over an area crowding out other plant and animals. Purple loosestrife is classified as an exotic weed under the Illinois Exotic Weed Control Act of 1987 and is prohibited from sale in Illinois.

Each seed capsule contains about 90 seeds; each stem has 1000 capsules each, each plant has 30+ stems that equal about 2,000,000 seeds per plant! Seeds can live in the water for 20 months before sprouting. Seeds are spread along the prevailing waterway, drainage ditch, scattered by birds and picked up and transported by an animal's hair or fur or through the air. Plants can also regenerate from small pieces of roots or stems, so mowing the plant can actually increase the population.

Traditional methods of control such as herbicides, mowing, controlled burns can be costly and at the same time ineffective. Herbicides, especially in wetlands, can kill other desirable plants. Mowing just chops the top off, giving the roots stimulation to produce more growth. Controlled burns also burn off just the top, leaving the root stronger for the next season.

The first step, take it out of your garden, dispose of it in a sealed plastic bag. A non-invasive variety is available, it is less showy, and shorter, reaching only about 2'. Other plants offer attractive pink spikes, and attract butterflies, and do no harm to the environment, such as veronicas, liatris and perennial salvias.

The most successful method of large-scale control is biological control with the release of loosestrife beetles, *Galerucella californiensis* or *Galerucella pusilla*.

For more information, visit the Illinois Natural History Survey site at: <http://www.inhs.uiuc.edu/cbd/loosestrife/bcpl.html>

The Illinois Indiana Sea Grant also has information about other invasive plants. View their publication at <http://iisgcp.org/pubs/br/iisg0122.pdf>

Roseann Grosse , Tazewell County Master Gardener

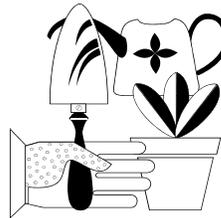
Spotlight on

Rock Island Master Gardeners

In 2001, Rock Island Master Gardeners volunteered 3,124 service hours and recorded 428 hours of continuing education training. Among the accomplishments of this group are these programs:

Nursery School "Lessons in Gardening"

A one-day horticulture event held at the Mark of the Quad Cities. The program featured 16 one-hour classes, covering topics for the beginner as well as for the more advanced gardener. Attendance for 2001 was 386.



Lawn/Garden and Flower show

A display booth was designed by and manned with Master Gardeners at the 2001 Symphony in Bloom flower show. In addition to promoting University of Illinois Extension, this show provided another opportunity to serve the community by answering gardening questions for the public. During the three-day show several thousand potential customers were made aware of our service.

Home Horticulture Help Line

The Master Gardeners operated a phone "HELP LINE" for local home gardeners to call and receive advice about how to maintain their gardens. The phone line is staffed Monday through Friday beginning in April and running through October. A total of 488 calls were logged this year. In addition to the phone calls the phone staff also answers questions from (63) guests that stopped in for every thing from weed to pest identification.

Illinois Flower & Garden Tour of Western Europe

Interested in Floriade? It's the "once every ten years treat" in Amsterdam and it's THIS YEAR!!

Join UI horticulturist Dianne Noland for an August Flower and Garden Tour of 5 countries in Western Europe, including the Floriade. The host of the WILL / PBS show IL Gardener and her husband and son will be hosting this great trip to Holland, Germany, Switzerland (where she was an exchange student), France (ah, Versailles!) and England. Join in the fun from August 11 to 24, 2002.

For more information or a travel itinerary, phone 217-333-8074 or you can email d-noland@uiuc.edu



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