



# Imagine

Illinois Master Gardeners' Information,  
News and Education

Vol. 12 No. 3  
May-June 2011

## Coordinators' Comments

Happy spring to one and all! I hope you can join us on campus this summer –July 7and 8th for our annual state conference and awards banquet. The format for conference this year is different than in years past and will feature morning tours each day followed by lunch on campus with afternoon classes. Conference information is found later in the newsletter.

The volunteer data for 2010 is finally tabulated! The volunteer hours have increased each year since 2000 and this year we can boast the most hours ever contributed in Illinois. Congratulations to each and every one of you for your wonderful service!

### *Illinois Master Gardener Statistics for 2010:*

**3440 Master Gardeners in Illinois as of 4-28-2011**

**186,748 Total Volunteer Hours**

**41,363 Continuing Education Hours**

**New MGs trained in 2011: 679**

**Value to the Citizens of Illinois: \$4.16 Million**

(This figure is based on the value of \$22.25 per volunteer hour from the Independent Sector).

One note to remind you of protocol. Please remember to wear your nametag when you are out in your communities volunteering. Remember to tell the public that you are a "University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener from XXX County". This is the proper way to refer to yourself rather than saying "I am a XXXX County Master Gardener." Little things do matter and this may seem insignificant but it is important to identify yourself with University of Illinois Extension. Please also remember that the title "University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener" is only to be used when you are conducting pre-approved unpaid educational programming. You may not use your title in any form of commercial advertisement or endorse any product or place of business. The title "Master Gardener" is not bestowed for life, so we request that once you leave the program you cease to use the title. You may however call yourself a Master Gardener alumnus and we hope you do!

✍ Monica David, IL Master Gardener Coordinator

## 2011 Silent Auction Items Needed!

We need your help to make the 8th annual Master Gardener Silent Auction a success. We are looking for donations of artwork, sculpture, paintings, books, garden tools, garden gifts, etc. The profits from the auction benefit the Illinois Master Gardener program. The silent auction will be held during the awards banquet on July 7<sup>th</sup> at the Hawthorne Suites. You may send your donation to Monica David or bring it to the conference registration desk at the Hawthorne Suites., but please contact Laura Hartman at [lhartman69@gmail.com](mailto:lhartman69@gmail.com) BEFORE THE CONFERENCE to let her know what you will be donating.

**Checks and cash only will be accepted at the auction.  
Sorry we cannot accept credit cards.**

## 2011 JMG® Awards Program

The National JMG® program is accepting nominations for the National Junior Master Gardener® Youth Excellence Award and the National Junior Master Gardener® Group Service and Achievement Award. The



Youth Excellence Award will be given to an individual who has demonstrated increased knowledge of horticulture and has provided leadership and volunteer service to the local community. The group award recognizes a JMG® group which has achieved a better appreciation of horticulture and has given back to their community to help others learn about gardening and horticulture. Winners will be formally announced at the 2011 International Master Gardener Conference in Charleston, West Virginia on Friday October 14, 2011. Each award provides the winner with a travel stipend of \$600 to attend the awards program. For information about these awards and an application to download, visit the JMG® website at <http://www.jmgkids.us/> Applications are due to the National Office by August 31, 2011.

# Change at the University of Illinois Plant Clinic



The University of Illinois Plant Clinic will open its doors for the 2011 season on Monday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>. The following are the new staff at the Plant Clinic, but we will continue to provide the same quality services, recommendations, and education:

**Suzanne Bissonette** was hired in August as the U. of I. Extension, Plant Clinic and IPM Coordinator. Her primary responsibilities are to centralize IPM educational outreach, diagnostics, and programming within the context of a virtual Center of Extension IPM outreach and provide program leadership for the NIFA Extension IPM (E-IPM) Illinois program, and the NPDN grant program as supports the Plant Clinic operation. She will provide leadership and deliver educational programming that includes the content areas of: plant disease and pest diagnostics and management; chemical, biological, cultural and physical pest control methods; rural and urban pest management. As coordinator, Suzanne is responsible for the supervision of the operation of the University of Illinois Plant Clinic.

**Stephanie Porter** was hired in February as the Visiting Plant Diagnostic Outreach Specialist-Crop Sciences. She will serve as a plant diagnostician at the University of Illinois Plant Clinic, collaborate with departmental Extension Specialists to diagnose plant health problems and provide management recommendations, and manage the database for plant disease (NPDN), insect and weed identification, and interface with counterparts in the North Central Plant Diagnostic Network. Additionally, Stephanie will develop short courses and outreach for plant diagnostics as outlined in the NIFA-Extension IPM (E-IPM) grant.

**I would also like to take this time to introduce the U of I Plant Clinic's Social Media!**

**Follow the U of I Plant Clinic on Facebook:**

<http://www.facebook.com/UofIPlantClinic>

The Plant Clinic Facebook Page provides pictures, links to websites, press releases, and “questions or samples of the day” about relevant, horticultural and crop issues in Illinois. We also have several Extension educators that share administration of our page in order to add to its content.

**Follow Stephanie Porter on Twitter:**

<http://twitter.com/skporter>

My twitter account: @skporter also provides updates on crop and horticultural issues in Illinois by use of pictures, links to the Plant Clinic Facebook Page or websites, and general blurbs.

**Follow the U of I Plant Clinic on Blogger:**

<http://universityofillinoisplantclinic.blogspot.com>

My goal is to blog at least once a week, with a focus on a relevant plant issue, event, or whatever comes to my mind at that time. The U of I Plant Clinic blog is posted on the U of I Plant Clinic Facebook Page and my Twitter account: @skporter. The U of I Plant Clinic blog may be a good spot to find answers to plant problems that may be happening in “your neck of the woods.”



The Plant Clinic is located on the north border of the University of Illinois farms in Urbana, nestled between the historic round barns and the new golf facility. The mailing address is: Plant Clinic, 1401 W. St. Mary's Rd., Urbana, IL 61801. The Plant Clinic's website is at <http://plantclinic.cropsci.illinois.edu/index.html>. Please refer to our website for details concerning services offered. If you prefer talking to a person, our telephone number is 217-333-0519. Whenever submitting a sample, provide as much information as possible on the pattern of injury in the planting, the pattern on one affected plant, and details describing how symptoms have changed over time to cause you concern. Most disease problems are handled in-house, but other problems may require us to find the appropriate campus specialist to help.

 Stephanie Porter

## Important Dates

**June 26:** Macon County Garden Walk, 3 to 7 p.m.-rain or shine. Seven gardens will be featured: formal and structured, less formal or cottage style, whimsical and fun, with a beautiful water feature and one with 50-75 year old plantings. This year also highlights two of Decatur's old historic homes and will include live music and light refreshments at one of the gardens. Tickets are \$8 in advance, \$10 the day of the walk. Sponsored by the Macon County Master Gardeners. For information call the Macon County Office at 217-877-6042.

**August 5-7:** 2011 Wisconsin Master Gardener Annual Conference, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Madison WI. Visit the conference website at <http://www.mamgawi.org>

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## Illinois Herb Association 2011 SummerFest

The Illinois Herb Association is pleased to announce its 2011 SummerFest which will be held at the Washington Park Botanical Garden, Springfield, IL on June 11. The schedule of events includes these sessions: "Landscaping with Herbs" by Pamela O'Neill; "Gardening Panel" by Dianne Noland and WILL TV's Illinois Gardener Panel Members; "Growing the 'Buy Local, Buy Fresh' Movement in Illinois" by Lindsay Record and "Sooth Your Stomach Woes with Herbs". The Fest begins at 8:30 a.m. and concludes at 3:10 pm. The day includes an herbal lunch, vendors and a tour of the Botanical Garden. Cost is \$20 for IHA members and \$30 for non-members. Contact Charlene Blary at 309-557-2107 or [Cblary@ilfb.org](mailto:Cblary@ilfb.org) for information or to register.

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## U of I Website Honored for Being "Green"

A University of Illinois Extension website aimed at helping urban students in grades 3 to 5 learn about nature has been cited by *The Journal*, an online magazine that seeks to transform education through technology. *The Journal* described Extension's "A Walk in the Woods" (<http://urbanext.illinois.edu/woods/>) as a "starting point for the environmental education of kids who encounter very little 'green' in their daily lives." Jane Scherer, U of I Extension urban programs specialist and director of its websites, said the website is one of the most popular offered by Extension and is used extensively in classrooms. The full *Journal* article is available at: <http://thejournal.com/articles/2011/04/06/teaching-green.aspx>.

## Brown Marmorated Stink Bug

Reports of the brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) continue to make headlines throughout Illinois. After the first confirmation of this invasive insect was reported in the fall of 2010 in Cook County, additional reports have continued in 2011 in northeastern Illinois as well as Kane, McLean and Champaign counties.

Kelly Estes, State Survey Coordinator for the Illinois Cooperative Agriculture Pest Survey, said it's important to be on the lookout for this pest. "Like many invasive species, BMSB has a long list of host plants, including many woody ornamental trees as well as several agricultural crops including fruit trees, grapes, tomatoes, corn, soybeans and others," she said. "It is easily moved from location to location by humans by hitchhiking on vehicles, movement of shipping materials, and movement of plants." Unlike many insect pests that only attack plants during certain times of the growing season, the BMSB will feed on host plants all season long, Estes added.

"This causes great concern in fruit crops where they begin feeding early in the season and continue through harvest," she said. "Growers should monitor fruit for sunken areas where the insect has fed. These areas will be discolored. Corky areas will be present under the skin of the fruit. In corn and soybean, BMSB feed on the developing pod or corn ear. They are able to feed through the husks and pods with their sucking mouthparts, causing the kernels and beans to shrivel. In tomatoes and peppers, feeding will also result in corky areas and discoloration, much like injury in fruit." In addition, Estes said BMSB is also considered a nuisance pest to homeowners. Much like boxelder bugs or multi-colored Asian lady beetles, these stink bugs congregate on houses in late fall and move indoors. Homeowners are likely to see new infestations as these insects will initially feed on common landscape ornamentals.

"Adult BMSB can be identified by the typical 'shield' shaped body of all stink bugs," she said. "In reference to their name, they have a marmorated or mottled brown color. Their antennae have distinct white bands; on the edge of their abdomen they have alternating black and white bands. The underside of the abdomen is white and the legs may also have faint white banding."



If you believe you have a suspect specimen, send the actual specimen to Kelly Estes at 1816 S. Oak St., Champaign, IL 61820. Place stink bugs in a crush-proof container (pill bottle, check box, etc.). Photos may also be e-mailed to [kcCook8@illinois.edu](mailto:kcCook8@illinois.edu) for preliminary screening.



# 2011 Master Gardener Conference

July 7-8

Hawthorne Suites Champaign

and

University of Illinois Campus-UIUC

The University of Illinois Extension Master Gardeners from Champaign, Coles, Ford- Iroquois and McLean Counties invite you to join us at the 2011 Master Gardener Conference. These volunteers have chosen “Back to Our Roots” as a theme- so come back to your university roots and learn about the education and research taking place here on campus. You will have a chance to visit horticultural and natural areas research as well as the university ornamental gardens and other campus highlights. Meet with researchers and university specialists during field trips and classes as you re-connect with your roots at the University of Illinois.

This conference is planned differently than past conferences and will include a morning tour and then afternoon classes on campus for each participant. All attendees will register at the Hawthorne Suites Ltd., 101 Trade Center Drive, Champaign- in the Conference Center lobby. Participants will then board buses outside the Conference Center for all activities on campus. Attendees will be returned by bus to the Hawthorn around 4:30 pm each day. No parking on campus will be allowed. **Check the website for more information– <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/mg/>**

## Conference Tours

**#1 University Gardens Tour** Bus departs from Hawthorne Suites at 8:00 am

This tour includes stops at the Champaign Master Gardener’s Idea Garden, the Hartley Display Gardens (All America Selections Trials) and Arboretum, the Japanese House and gardens and the Pollinatarium.

**#2 Greenhouse Tours and Herbarium** Bus departs from Hawthorne Suites at 8:00 am

Visit the research and teaching greenhouses on campus as well as the conservatory, and the Herbarium where plants are collected and preserved.

**# 3 Natural Areas Tour** Bus departs from Hawthorne Suites at 8:00 am

This group will visit prairie, woodland and buffer areas at Trelease and Brownfield Woods while learning about natives and restoration.

**# 4 Allerton Park Tour** Bus departs from Hawthorne Suites at 8:00 am and returns at 12:45 pm (Lunch included at the park for this tour) Visit the formal gardens, sculptures, natural areas and interpretative trails on this 1,500 acre estate owned by the University of Illinois.

**#5 Energy Farm and Sustainable Student Farms Tour** Bus departs from Hawthorne Suites at 8:15 am

This group will learn about the research efforts on grasses and trees at the Energy Farm and visit the Student Farm where vegetables are raised for campus. Includes a brief stop at the fruit tree and grape farm.

**#6 Tree Identification Walk** Bus departs from Hawthorne Suites at 10:00 am

Join professor Gary Kling on a tree identification walk around campus.

**# 7 Krannert Center for the Performing Arts Backstage Tour and Rare Books Collection**

Bus departs from Hawthorne Suites at 9:15 am

An up-close look at the scene, costume, and prop shops; visits to the magnificent rehearsal spaces; and peeks into the crannies backstage at Krannert. At the Rare Book room, the group will see rare botanical books and manuscripts as well as some of the most renowned books in their collections.

## Educational Classes

### Thursday July 7th

#### ***Who Else is Growing in the Garden? Kids! Research Evidence of the Benefits and Applications***

Learn about the research findings that show children and youth are mentally, socially, and physically healthier when they frequently play in, or even just look upon, green spaces and gardens. Then learn how to apply those research findings in your own community to support young people's healthy development.

#### ***Chocolate - the Food of the Gods***

Come join Dr. Skirvin as he discusses the history of *Theobroma cacao* and how it is made into chocolate. The lecture will include a hands-on taste-testing of various types of chocolate and discussion about this important agricultural product.

#### ***Landscaping with Illinois Native Plants***

In this session you will learn about Illinois native plant communities, the benefits of using native plants, and design strategies for incorporating natives into your home landscape.

#### ***Knock-Your-Socks-Off Perennials & Way-Too-Cool Annuals***

See what the latest and greatest is in the world of perennials and annuals for the garden, and what gives them such a lofty position among landscape plants. You will learn about new highly desired products on the market, and some excellent "tried and true" plant choices that would make good garden selections that you may not have tried!

#### ***See Spot? Every Spot Tells a Story***

Learn the basics of Plant Disease Diagnosis. This hands-on session will explore the steps to making a disease diagnosis of current ornamental diseases. We will use live and preserved disease specimens, dissecting microscopes and useful resources to help you on the path to accurate diagnosis.

### Friday July 8<sup>th</sup>

#### ***Urban Agriculture – Farming a New Frontier***

In this session, we will explore the new trend of urban food production considering the historic legacy, current examples, and future opportunities to support local food systems.

#### ***Backyard birds and wildlife of Illinois: How their populations have changed over the last 100 years and what is to come in the future***

From 2006-2009 researchers at the University of Illinois and The Nature Conservancy repeated a survey of birds first conducted in 1906. This study counted populations of all birds, as researchers walked across Illinois. One of the most interesting findings is that the community of birds in our backyard has dramatically changed. Dr. Ward will review how bird and wildlife populations have changed, and what we should expect in the future. He will also discuss how backyards may be an important habitat in the future and what we need to do to make backyards "good" habitat for wildlife.

#### ***Grape Growing and Wine Making in Illinois***

Dr. Skirvin will discuss the history and background of grape and wine production in Europe and America, and relate that information to the growing wine industry in Illinois.

#### ***Bugs Hands-On!***

Participants will look at insect specimens and samples of their damage. Some will be live, some will be dead, but they will all be real, up-close, and personal! This is a hands-on lab session.

#### ***Send in the Clones—AKA Plant Propagation***

Have you ever admired a friend's plant and wanted one of your own? You've searched and searched, and you can't find that exact plant? Now you can make a clone from a cutting! All it takes is a pair of garden clippers, some soil in a pot, maybe a little rooting powder, and voila! Come and learn the various ways to propagate a plant and fill your home or garden with the plants you have cloned!

#### ***Hostas: The Myths and the Magic of the Green, the Blue, the Yellow, and the White***

In this presentation, The Weber's will cover why is it good for gardeners to know the major families of hosta, the pluses and minuses of each, and the desirability of each type for certain soil, light and water conditions in your gardens. Mike will also share his expertise with planting tips and his most recent discoveries about soils and soil amending. Susan will introduce you to some of their most recent favorites, and conclude with a few suggestions for mixing hostas and companion plants in the landscape design.

**Registration is now open!**

**<http://web.extension.illinois.edu/mg/conference2011/>**

Full Registration: \$120 per person

Single Day Registrations: Thursday \$70 per person, Friday \$70 per person

**Space is limited to 330 participants. First come – first served.**

**Registration closes on June 22 or when all spots are filled.**

## Help Needed to Locate Escaped *Miscanthus* Populations

University of Illinois researcher Lauren Quinn is conducting a study on escaped or whole populations of *Miscanthus sinensis* or *M. sacchariflorus* in natural areas in Illinois. These species are commonly planted in gardens but many varieties have the capacity to produce copious amounts of seeds which can establish in “natural areas” such as roadsides, pastures or forest openings to become invasive. Lauren hopes to describe the current distribution of these populations and visit as many of these populations this summer or next.

Dr. Quinn is reaching out to Master Gardeners to help locate and identify these populations. Those who wish to participate should be able to identify *Miscanthus sinensis* and *M. sacchariflorus*, although visual aids are available for assistance at these websites:

<http://plants.usda.gov/java/profile?symbol=MISI>

<http://plants.usda.gov/java/profile?symbol=MISA>

<http://miscanthus.cfans.umn.edu/identification.html>

Volunteers will locate *Miscanthus* in natural areas rather than “volunteer” plants in the same yard where they were originally planted. Lauren is hoping to find plants that have moved themselves (via seed or rhizome dispersal) a substantial distance away from plantings to establish healthy self-sustaining populations.



Lauren Quinn, Bugwood.org.

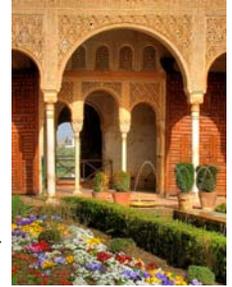
This type of information will need to be gathered:

- Location (GPS coordinates helpful but not required)
- Description of environmental context (roadside etc.)
- Population size
- If on private property– contact information of property owners
- An estimate of the history of the population
- A photo of the population
- Your contact information

If possible volunteers could add their sightings to the map of naturalized *Miscanthus* populations on EDDMaps. <http://www.eddmaps.org/reprot/index2.cfm>  
Master Gardeners could also send their sightings directly to Lauren Quinn at [ldquinn@illinois.edu](mailto:ldquinn@illinois.edu)

## Indulge Yourself in a Trip to Spain

Join fellow gardeners and Master Gardener Coordinator Monica David on a trip to view the glorious gardens of Spain and immerse yourself in the flamboyant culture of this wonderful country. The trip runs September 10-22, 2012 and will visit the cities and gardens of Granada, Cordoba, Seville, Ronda and Madrid.



The trip begins with two fabulous gardens in Granada– Jardin de Carmen de los Matires and La Huerta de San Vincente. The garden of Carmen de los Matires was originally a shrine, then a Carmelite convent and now a beautifully restored 19th century garden. After experiencing the beautiful architecture and food in Granada, the group will visit Alhambra Palace and Generalife Gardens– one of the most spectacular gardens in the world.



En route to Cordoba, we travel thru olive groves to reach the Great Mosque with its distinctive red and white tiles and Patio de los Naranjos (patio of the orange trees). In Cordoba the group will also visit the Royal Palaces of the Alcazar with beautiful pools and fountains.

Next up is Seville where Maria-Luisa Park and the Plaza de Espana were laid out in 1929 for a “Fair of the Americas” which never took place. Later the group will visit the Gardens of Murillo and Seville’s majestic cathedral. Perhaps the most well know garden in Seville is the Garden of the Royal Palaces of the Alcazar which mixes Christian and Moorish styles of architecture with outstanding gardens, unique plants and many fountains.

Ronda is a spectacular town rising above the gorges of the River Tajo. Alameda del Tajo Gardens and Palace of the Moorish King of Ronda will be enjoyed here. After touring the sites of Ronda, the group will board a high speed train to Madrid where the Parque Buen Retiro with its lovely rose garden and the Botanic Gardens will be featured. Free time to enjoy the sites of Madrid. On the last day, the group will tour the UNESCO World Heritage Segovia, a city that demonstrates Roman architectural mastery.

Tour price is \$3,999 per person land only. Airfare cannot be booked until September 2011. To view the entire itinerary visit <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/mg/events>.  
Contact Robyn Gulstrom to reserve your spot at 269-629-9248 or [rgulstrom@comcast.net](mailto:rgulstrom@comcast.net)

## 31st Annual Seed Savers Conference July 15-17, 2011

Seed Savers Exchange is a non-profit, 501(c)(3), member supported organization that saves and shares the heirloom seeds of our garden heritage, forming a living legacy that can be passed down through generations. Seed Savers Exchange was founded in 1975 by Diane Ott Whealy and Kent Whealy to honor this tradition of preserving and sharing. Today, the 890-acre Heritage Farm, near Decorah, Iowa, is the home to Seed Savers. They maintain many thousands of heirloom garden varieties, most having been brought to North America by members' ancestors who emigrated from Europe, the Middle East, Asia and other parts of the world.

This year's conference theme is all about seeds—growing them, harvesting them, and saving them—with plenty of workshops to show you how it's done. Board members, advisors and SSE staff—including Rosalind Creasy, David Cavagnaro, Glenn Drowns, Keith Crotz, John Swenson and Joel Girardin—will share their expertise on garlic, gardening, heritage livestock and more. They'll have seed saving workshops with Suzanne Ashworth, author of the encyclopedic seed-saving guide "Seed to Seed," as well as heritage bud grafting with orchard advisor Lindsay Lee.

This year's speakers include: **Jeff McCormack**, founder of Southern Exposure Seed Exchange; **Woody Tasch**, founder and chairman of Slow Money, a nonprofit formed in 2008 to catalyze the flow of investment capital to small food enterprises; **Matthew Dillon**, director of Organic Seed Alliance (OSA) and **Craig LeHoullier** who has been a member of Seed Savers Exchange since 1986 and whose true passion is gardening—particularly growing tomatoes.

Online registration is now available at [www.seedsavers.org/](http://www.seedsavers.org/) or call 563-382-5990.

## Southern Illinois Gift Gardens

University of Illinois Extension has initiated a program called Growing Illinois Food Together (GIFT) gardens in southern Illinois. These are youth-led, adult assisted gardening projects being established in counties and cities all around the southern region of the state.

Program participants maintained gardens to provide fresh produce for local food pantries, senior nutrition sites, and community members. In the 2010 growing season, 17 GIFT gardens yielded over 5,400 pounds of produce including sweet corn, tomatoes, onions, squash and cantaloupe.

"The main goal of the program is for communities to grow healthy, local food together," said Elizabeth Wahle, Extension Horticulture specialist and GIFT coordinator. While each county managed the program differently, all counties required community volunteers to plant and regularly weed, fertilize and water the gardens.

In Monroe County, 10 youth oversaw four garden sites that provided tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, lettuce, zucchini and sweet corn. "The group chose plant varieties based on the size of the garden and obtained bedding plants from agricultural departments at local schools" said Pam Jacobs, County Director. "They planted a garden at a local church and also worked with senior residents at an assisted living facility to help maintain their garden." The youth worked with several Master Gardeners and a junior 4-H member, who provided gardening guidance and taught lessons on pests and composting.

Twelve of the 27 counties in southern Illinois participated in the first year of GIFT. "I'm please that so many counties were able to quickly organize and get the program off the ground," Wahle said. "Our goal is to have a youth-led garden in every county."

Visit the Illinois Master Gardener website: <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/mg>



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