



Imagine

Illinois Master Gardeners' Information,
News and Education

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Coordinators' Comments

Reenergize. Reconnect. Reinvest.

Volunteerism

University of Illinois Extension has always valued its amazing volunteers and wants to take a system-wide look at how we can strengthen our volunteer engagement practices. It's a major priority of ours for the coming year.

On September 20 – 21 Extension staff will participate in a training and strategizing process, led at the state level with gatherings in each Extension Unit. A committee made up of administrators, a 4-H Educator and a Community worker, an MG Coordinator, a Hort Educator, 4-H staff and myself have been working hard to prepare for this meeting. This is the first step in re-energizing staff and volunteers; establishing role clarity for our new staff and educators; developing unit and personal staff goals for working with volunteers and creating a unified volunteer delivery system to improve our volunteer programs.

To help us do our best thinking during the meeting, we need input from you—our volunteers! We are therefore asking all Extension volunteers from every one of our programs to give us 15 more minutes of your valuable time to complete a survey. You will have the chance to praise what we do well and to make recommendations for what we need to do better. The survey is available online and can be accessed at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ExtVol>. You also have the option of completing a paper copy of the survey. Your County Director, Educator or Master Gardener Program Coordinator will be sending you this link to complete the survey. **We need your responses by midnight on September 15th.**

We thank you in advance for taking the time to respond to this survey. We will share the results with you – and our plans for acting on your ideas – over the coming months. Your input will have a direct impact on our efforts to strength our Extension-wide volunteer strategies.

 Monica David, Illinois Master Gardener Coordinator

Master Gardener Advisory Committee Openings

The State Master Gardener advisory committee is looking for a Master Gardener volunteer from each of these regions - **North West (NW), West Central (WC) and Southern (S)**. 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 2 staff and 2 Master Gardeners from each of the five Extension regions along with the state coordinator. The goals of the committee are:

- * To serve as advisory council to the state coordinator
- * Encourage equitable distribution of state Master Gardener resources
- * Recommend minimum standards for core training
- * Strengthen and support state education and training
- * Increase awareness of the program
- * Support an annual conference
- * Recommend policies and guidelines for the program

If you would be interested in applying for these openings (you must live in the NW, WC or S region), 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, MG Coordinator or Educator must accompany your application.

Applications are due to the State Office by October 1.

IMGC Registration Still Open

Registration for the International Master Gardener Conference will close on October 1. The conference will be held October 11-14 in Charleston, West Virginia. The conference features outstanding tours, keynote speakers, a trade show and a wide selection of break-out sessions. Join Master Gardeners from all over the United States and Canada for this great educational and networking opportunity. For information or to register: <http://imgc.ext.wvu.edu/>

CoCoRaHS

Master Gardeners— are you aware of the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network (CoCoRaHS)? www.cocorahs.org Anyone who's interested in helping measure and report precipitation can help. Many Master Gardeners in Colorado and in other parts of the country have found out about CoCoRaHS and joined the effort. Master Gardeners make great volunteers as they know the importance of rainfall and also appreciate the value of volunteerism. We started CoCoRaHS in 1998 here at Colorado State University after our community experienced an extreme and devastating local flash flood. We now have nearly 15,000 active volunteers, and CoCoRaHS has grown to become the largest source of reliable daily precipitation data in the U.S. The data are used every day by National Weather Service, media, USDA, teachers and researchers and many other organizations.



Last year we started a project to develop instructional resources for Master Gardeners to improve their understanding of climate -- climate controls, seasonal cycles, averages, extreme events, storm tracks and much more. We recently completed these materials and field tested them via Webinars and face to face presentations to several county Master Gardener groups in Colorado. This "Climate Resources Guide for Master Gardeners" is now available in the form of an on-line slide show (<http://www.cocorahs.org/Content.aspx?page=MasterGardener>). It introduces elements of large scale and local climate important to gardeners. An overview of climate patterns and differences are shown. Links to many regional and local weather and climate resources are provided. Topics include: Climate & Gardening, Sunshine, Temperature, Humidity and Dew Point, Precipitation, Wind, Evapotranspiration, Climate Resources, Climate Change and CoCoRaHS. This climate resource guide is generalized so that it can be used anywhere in the country (although some features maybe more relevant to Colorado).

We are looking for more rain gauge volunteers, too. Master Gardeners can consider being rain gauge reporters, to do so please join CoCoRaHS. We also have a rain gauge program for schools. The contact for that project is Noah Newman (nnewman@atmos.colostate.edu).

Nolan Doesken
State Climatologist
Colorado Climate Center
Colorado State University

Diversifying Gardens with Heirloom Varieties

Some 10 years ago as a Master Gardener intern, I wanted to learn more about heirloom vegetables and share that information in a talk. At that time, it wasn't easy to find information although I do live in the state that is home to Seed Savers Exchange, a non-profit organization dedicated to saving and sharing heirloom seeds. Today when I visit the Des Moines Downtown Farmer's Market and the farmers markets in Ames, there are heirloom vegetables galore – especially tomatoes. In the past several years, I've been surprised ... and delighted to find heirloom tomato plants for sale at Iowa greenhouses, grocers and farmers markets.

Today there are fact sheets and columns on heirloom vegetables written by land-grant university Extension horticultural specialists and faculty. There is even information on how-to save open-pollinated seed. Here's what I found.

Clemson Cooperative Extension fact sheet lists specific varieties and background on heirloom vegetables, directions and tips for saving seed. <http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/plants/vegetables/gardening/hgic1255.html>

Great Lakes Region, 2009 Evaluation of Ten Heirloom Tomato Varieties at Nine Sites: Barker, N.Y.; Rock Springs, Penn.; Piketon, Ohio; Columbus, Ohio; South Charleston, Ohio; Macomb County, Mich.; West Lafayette, Ind.; Dixon Springs, Ill. and Waseca, Minn. http://anrcom.msu.edu/news/article/colorful_tomatoes_will_hit_local_markets_this_summer

University of Florida, Okeechobee County, Heirlooms – and other Seedy Words, has seed sources and references, <http://okeechobee.ifas.ufl.edu/News%20columns/Heirloom.Vegetables.htm>

University of Hawaii, Heirloom vegetable varieties: a promising future for past treasures? <http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/sustainag/news/articles/V6-Radovich-heirloom.pdf>

University of Kentucky, lots of selected resources, <http://www.uky.edu/Ag/NewCrops/introsheets/heirloom.pdf>

Washington State University, Community Horticulture Fact Sheet #17, Saving Seeds from Heirloom and Other Vegetables, <http://king.wsu.edu/gardening/documents/17HeirloomVegetablesandSavingSeed.pdf>

Lynette Spicer, Communications Specialist, Iowa State University

Costa Rica 2012

Gardens, Rainforest and Wildlife

Join fellow gardeners as we explore the rich diversity of Costa Rica. This tour is being offered on February 13-21, 2012 for Illinois Master Gardeners, their families and friends. The tour will include onsite visits to private gardens, wildlife and rainforest preserves, national parks, local farms and botanical gardens, all while surrounded by mountains or in view of the picturesque Pacific Coast. Costa Rica has a tremendous natural diversity of plants, birds and animals and this trip promises to immerse you in a botanical paradise. This eco-tour will put us in out of the way places and walking trails may be rough or steep and there is always the chance of encountering exotic insects or snakes.

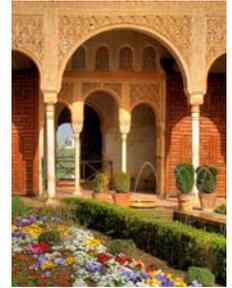


The itinerary begins in San Jose, the capitol of Costa Rica which is nestled in the central valley. Our first stop will be Costa Flores to visit their lush tropical gardens, then on to the Sarapiquí region. In this area we will visit the Corsicana pineapple plantation and then La Tirimbina reserve where we will hike through the rainforest and visit an organic cacao plantation to make and eat our own chocolate. On day four we stop at the magnificent La Paz Waterfall Gardens to see lush tropical rain forest, flowing white rivers, spectacular waterfalls, birds, butterflies, monkeys, sloths, snakes, frogs and more. The next day is highlighted by a visit to the Else Kientzler Botanical Garden and the private garden of Ligia Cooper. On our way to the Pacific coast we will visit Villa Vanilla for a sensory journey to smell, touch and taste many different spices. On the coast the group will visit Manual Antonio Park and have free time to enjoy our oceanside resort. As we head back to San Jose we will visit the Orchid Garden and then conclude with a visit to the private estate of Ileana Teran.

The trip is priced at \$2690 per person, double occupancy. A \$1000 deposit is required with your registration form. Airfare is not included— you may find your own airfare or Hidden Botanical Treasures Tours will assist you. For more information or to book your trip contact mary@hiddentreasuresbotanicaltours.com The full trip itinerary and registration form may be found on the Illinois Master Gardener website.

The Gardens and Cultures of Spain

Sign up now to accompany Monica David, Master Gardener Coordinator 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 world's most spectacular gardens.

En route to Cordoba, we travel thru olive groves to reach the Great Mosque with it's 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 shows 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 by email to hold your spot - rgulstrom@comcast.net

USDA Modifies Regulations for Importing Non-Native Plants

Effective June 27, 2011 the USDA has made a modification to importation rules for plants used in gardening and landscape design. Until recently, APHIS' Q37 regulations categorized imported plants as either prohibited (not allowed) or restricted (allowed under certain conditions) and did not require a pest risk analysis prior to the importation of a new taxonomic group of plants. This differs from APHIS' fruits and vegetables regulations where the importation of fruits and vegetables is prohibited until the completion of such an analysis.

Plants for planting can carry a wide variety of pests that are more likely to become established in the United States than pests that could enter through imported fruits or vegetables. The plant itself also could be a pest. It is important for APHIS to enhance its regulations to ensure that they provide adequate protection against the risk posed by plants that are being imported.

The new category for imported plants for planting lists taxa of plants whose importation is **not authorized pending pest risk analysis (NAPPRA)**. If scientific evidence indicates that the taxon of plants for planting is a quarantine pest or a host of a quarantine pest, they will publish a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing their determination that the taxon is a quarantine pest or a host of a quarantine pest, cite the scientific evidence considered in making this determination, and give the opportunity to comment on their determination. If they receive no comments that change the determination, the taxon will subsequently be added to the new category. This new category allows them to take prompt action on evidence that the importation of a taxon of plants for planting may pose a risk while continuing to allow for public participation in the process. If petitioned, they will conduct a pest risk analysis for a taxon that has been added to the new category. After the pest risk analysis is completed, they will either remove the taxon from the category and allow its importation subject to general requirements, allow its importation subject to specific restrictions or prohibit its importation. The idea behind this new regulation is to keep out harmful pests and pathogens while allowing some flexibility as well as public input on the process.



Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI)

BGCI is an international organization that exists to ensure the world-wide conservation of threatened plants, influence policy development and develop educational programs and resources, all while working to promote sustainable livelihoods and study climate change.

BGCI represents over 700 members - mostly botanic gardens - in 118 countries. The group partners with local botanic gardens (Chicago Botanic Garden and Morton Arboretum are members), and other conservation partners to secure plant diversity for the benefit of people and the environment. Their aim is to ensure that threatened species are secure in botanic garden collections as an insurance policy against loss in the wild.

BGCI also participates in the Global Trees Campaign. In 1998 over 8,753 tree species, 10% of the world's total, were threatened with extinction according to The World List of Threatened Trees. For example— research by BGCI and Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh shows that a quarter of the 1157 *Rhododendron* species are under threat in the wild; one *Rhododendron* plant species (*Rhododendron kanehirae*) would be extinct but for collections in botanic gardens (one of which is the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Scotland); and another species of *Rhododendron* is now completely extinct. Also 78 species of wild oaks are in danger of extinction and nearly 1/3 of all maple species are under the threat of extinction in their native habitats. Visit <http://www.globaltrees.org/> for more information. The Morton Arboretum is currently running an new exhibit titled "Vanishing Acts Trees Under Threat"

Another mission of the BGCI is education. The organization produces resources and teaching materials for youth and educators as well as the trilingual magazine "Roots" which is published twice a year and contains a wealth of information - case studies, activities, resources and the latest research in botanic garden and plant-based education.

For more information about the programs and research conducted at BGCI visit <http://www.bgci.org/global/>