

July 2022

Garden Beet



MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION OF TIPPECANOE COUNTY

Message from Your Co-Presidents

Jim and Mickey

Many years ago there was a public service announcement that went something like this: "It's 10:30; do you know where your children are?" Following along those lines we ask: It's half past 2022; do you know where your hours are? They can be entered by following the link at <https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/>.

The first item on this page is the "Click HERE" link to enter hours. It takes you to the page to sign in. (Another way to access the sign-in page is to go to the MGATC website under the "For Members" tab. The first link on the page leads to the same place.)

Before clicking on the link, notice the sentence right below. It says, "So far in 2022, 1,906 volunteers have given 51,339 hours, valued at \$1,317,867. (It's updated periodically based on hours' entry.) The total is used to show the value of the Master Gardener Program statewide. See the dollar value that Purdue assigns to our contributions. If

Master Gardeners don't enter hours in the system, the program doesn't get credit for our hard work.

Another reason to put hours in frequently is that it's easier to remember what you did and when you did it - easier than going through a calendar or some old notes at the end of the year. It also lets Pat approve the hours in manageable chunks rather than being swamped by a tsunami of entries around the New Year.

In 2020 the minimum hours were suspended. Last year the requirement was set at six volunteer hours and six education hours. This change was not well communicated. When we reached year-end, a few members were surprised. Board members worked with those people to get them current for the year including sending the link to previous meeting recordings to fulfill education hours. Also, because they did not enter hours, these same members missed the automatic notification

about the Annual Agreement. We worked hard to get everyone current. This year the requirement is back to the standard 12 volunteer hours and six education hours. By attending, in person or virtually, at least half of the monthly meetings, putting in a minimum of volunteer hours - plenty of opportunities are listed in the front of the Green Book or one phone call/email away, entering hours regularly, and watching for the Annual Agreement notification, this year should run smoothly.

Note: the average of the above statewide numbers for half a year are over 26 hours per person. Wouldn't it be nice if each master gardener ignored the minimum and set a personal goal of 50 hours a year - only two hours a week during growing season?

Jim and Mickey

GAAP

Many thanks to the 33 Master Gardeners who planted over 4,000 annuals at the (Great Annual Annual Planting) GAAP sites: Indiana Veteran's Home, Columbian Park Zoo, Lafayette Art Museum, Pedestrian Bridge, and Tippecanoe County Courthouse. As always, we couldn't do this without you. It was really nice to be able to get together again and show what we can

do! We spent one and a half to three hours or more planting at each location. At Columbian Park, it started raining, but our Master Gardeners are real troopers and most stayed until everything was planted. We put out our Master Gardener signs to let people passing by know who was planting and we received several nice comments and thumbs ups.

Dee Dee Long and Jan Sadler

Programs

July 5 • 6:30 p.m. • TCEO
Subject: Chemicals
Pat Williams

August 2 • 6:30 p.m. • TCEO
Subject: Herbs and
Possibly Tomatoes
Dan Falls
Bloomers Greenhouse

For more information on upcoming events, contact Amanda Burge at amanda_personett@yahoo.com.

Please submit items for the *Garden Beet* to MGATCGardenBeet@gmail.com by the 15th of the month for the next month's issue.

Items to be emailed to the membership should be sent to Dee Dee Long at deedee1mg@gmail.com.

<http://www.tippecanoeastgardener.org>

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/>



MGATC Minutes: June 7, 2022, 6:30 p.m., TCEO

At 6:30 p.m. on June 7th the monthly MGATC meeting was held both virtually and in person. The speaker was the company, Cousins Compost, and their speech was on Vermiculture, or Composting with Worms. They covered the vermiculture cycle, worm biology, and compared vermiculture with more conventional “hot bin” com-

posting. They also discussed the compost output with worm castings.

After the speech, the business portion of the meeting was held. However there were only a couple questions. Someone asked if the food at the Hoe Down had been decided yet. However, it has not. Someone else asked about

having a booth at the fair, but that has not been firmed up yet.

With that, the meeting was adjourned.

- Nancy Cope, Recording Secretary

Treasurer's Report

June 2022 Board Meeting Treasurer's Report

Income for the month of May 2022 was \$38.84 from 2022 Dues and an Amazon Smile Donation. Total Income for Year-to-date 2022 is \$14,933.12 which is 31% higher than budgeted due to the success of the Garden Expo event and the efforts to promote memberships/dues.

In May we spent a total of \$1,048.58 from the Unrestricted Budget. \$508.02 was for building beds in the demo garden and \$540.56 for the Garden Expo advertising bills. In the Restricted Funds, we spent \$29 in the Chatham Square Community Garden for shed keys and \$75 for the compost project. The Restricted Fund Balance for May was \$11,251.27. The total of Unrestricted Funds available was \$25,850.12 as of 5/31/22.

Deb Rimer, Treasurer

Garden Gossip

Thinking About Thistle By Jim Jeray

Most gardeners don't want to think about thistle, they just want to get rid of it. It's described in various places as an “aggressive invader” and “troublesome.” The trouble with thistle is that

it spreads through both seeds and budding from underground roots.

You may be tempted to reach down with a gloved hand and pull it out, but the roots break off and start to regenerate causing more problems. The best



way to treat thistle is to spray with Thistledown when they first emerge. I keep a labeled spray bottle in the demo garden shed. If they have already begun to blossom, as shown in the one picture, cut off the flowers before spraying. This will solve the seed problem. Thistledown will enter through the leaves to solve the root problem. The second picture shows plants 3-4 days after spraying. After spraying I will place a caution sign on the area and record the treatment. (Mickey also has caution signs.)



Thistledown is nasty stuff and can affect other broadleaf plants. It also persists for a long time in the soil. It must be used with care: wearing protective clothing, avoiding drift, and being precise about spot application. Here is a link to additional safety information: https://www.montereylawngarden.com/product/thistledown/?attachment_id=737&download_file=5b96aa340995e.

An alternative to chemical use is to cut the tops off the emerging buds by hand or by mowing every 2-3 weeks until eventually the roots run out of energy. But thistle cannot be smothered with straw or paper. The roots will spread and find a way out.

Raised Beds

Thank you to Doug Ketterer for the wonderful job of replacing the raised-



beds in the Demonstration Garden. It was a lot of work, but it turned out very well.

-Jim Jeray

MGATC Board: June 9, 2022, 6:30 p.m., Virtual

Jim Jeray called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. on June 9, 2022. Present were Pat Williams, Jolaine Roberts, Mickey Penrod, Dee Dee Long, Deb Rimer, Jim Jeray, Kathie Cox, and Nancy Cope.

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

Deb gave the Treasurer Report.

Mickey talked about the process of getting some more tillers for the extension gardens. Nancy offered to give her tiller to the group, but Mickey has to find someone with a truck to pick it up in Delphi. Mickey also discussed the conditions of the tillers currently at the gardens.

Mickey also noted that the new sign in the pollinator garden is now installed and looks nice.

Jim discussed the latest bill from Lawn & Scrub.

Pat discussed the monthly hybrid meeting. He said that he forgot to record the last meeting. He Zoomed into the meeting to test that the speaker portion of the meeting was working, then forgot to record it.

Jim mentioned that there is a kit to take to events where MGATC is manning a booth so that everything that is needed will be together. However it hasn't been updated in a long time, and is in dire need of it. Mickey noted that the people who volunteer to work these booths should be good speakers and enjoy dealing with the public. In this vein, it was brought up that there should be an approval process for accepting a booth job. What has happened in the past is that the job is ap-

proved, then the group has to scramble to find volunteers to work the booth. We should come up with a process where we make sure we have enough volunteers lined up before we accept a booth job.

Pat said that when the county fair comes to town with a carnival, the carnival tickets are sold by local non-profit organizations as a fundraiser. Would MGATC be interested? Other groups have raised \$3,000. It would last the length of the fair. The question is whether we could get enough volunteers. Pat said he would get some more details, then Dee Dee will send out a mass email to see how many members would be interested in volunteering.

Pat then talked about the Mandela Washington Fellowship Program. Purdue will be hosting several emerging business leaders from Africa. Pat volunteered the MGATC gardens as a stop on their tour. He would like to have some volunteers help him show the recipients the gardens and talk about the Master Gardener program. It would only take a couple hours.

There was a discussion about some gardens that have been managed by MGATC in the past and whether we would continue to take care of them. There was discussion about how a location should be chosen. Pat said that the location has to be available to the public, no private gardens allowed. He said that MGATC should be presenters, not weed pullers. Or if a lot of planting and weeding is going on, there should also be a presentation at the location on the work we're doing. Three locations in particular were discussed: the Haan Museum, the Fairview Community Center, and the Ca-

nal Park in Delphi. A motion was passed to remove the Haan Museum from the list immediately. The Fairview Community Center and Canal Park will be removed at the end of the year. This means that once the location has been removed from our list, volunteer hours can no longer be counted.

The board wanted to thank Jeri Bosworth's husband for mowing at the extension gardens. There was discussion on how to get him gas for his mower. It was decided he could have access to the gas cans in the sheds. Jim will tell Jeri.

Jim talked about a non-profit donation that local business Blue Fox Heating & Cooling is offering every month. They want a brief paragraph about why we think our non-profit is deserving of the donation. Jim wrote an essay about how we need funds for moving our sheds. Dee Dee knows the business owners and will put in a good word for us. Mickey said she can also write one about needing tillers.

Jim mentioned that the Children's Garden shed is in need of repair. The work is being done by Ed Knoth. He is donating the labor and materials. Jim told him to give him an amount in materials to post as a donation.

Dee Dee said that there are some Expo items that need building and existing items scattered at various people's homes. They need some storage to keep it all in one place. It's something to think about for a future meeting.

With that, the meeting was adjourned.

- Nancy Cope, Recording Secretary

**A perfect summer day is when the sun
is shining, the breeze is blowing, the birds
are singing, and the lawnmower is broken**

~James Dent

What's Happening

Wednesdays in the Wild

Registration is required by noon on the Monday prior to the program to Mary Cutler at mcutler@tippecanoe.in.gov or 765-567-2993. All programs have limited participation and fill up quickly.

July 6 • 1-3 • TIPP BF GO FISH!

(Rods, reels, & bait provided)
Mary Cutler

Fish biology and an adaptation talk by Tippecanoe County Naturalist Mary Cutler will be followed by fishing on Burnett Creek. Limited to 25.

July 13 • 10 a.m.-Noon* • WNC A Bird in the Hand: Using Mist Nets to Capture Brlds Mickey & Sally Weeks

Join Dr. Mickey and Sally Weeks (Purdue University, Retired) as they share the scientific practice of mist-netting: capturing and banding birds to study. Birds will be caught at this presentation and participants will be allowed to ID and hold birds, if desired! Limited to 20 participants. Note: this is the first of two programs on July 13th.

July 13 • 1-3 p.m. • CBNA Butterflies of Tippecanoe County Jon Neal

Retired Purdue Entomologist Jon Neal will give a brief outdoor presentation on identification techniques related to local butterflies and then head out into the planted prairies and savannas of the Celery Bog in search of these jewels of summer! Bring binoculars. Limited to 30 participants.

July 20 • 1-3 p.m. • MARTELL I Spy: How to See the Unseen Wildlife on Your Property Jarred Brooke

We often see or hear many wildlife species as we walk through local prairies or woods. But beyond these obvious diurnal species, what about the host of wildlife species that are active at night or spend most of their life hidden? Jarred Brooke (Purdue University

Extension Wildlife Specialist) will showcase a variety of easy techniques that wildlife researchers use to see unseen wildlife.

Limited to 30 participants.

July 27 • 1-3 p.m. • STEPHENS Purdue Stephens Forest: A Carroll County Gem Brian Beheler

Brian Beheler (Purdue Farm Manager) will lead a hike at this unique property where glacial till soils collide with changes in land use, ecological challenges, and forest management. A wetland created by the old canal trench and deep ravines dominate the landscape. We'll take a look at some unique planted species on the property, tree planting results, and much more. Easy walking on forest roads. Limited to 30 participants.

August 3 • 6-8 p.m. • PWA Get Up-close and Personal with Wetland Plants!

Mary Cutler, Carole Lembi Ross,
& Stephanie Frischie

On this short hike to visit a wetland at the Purdue Wildlife Area, learn about the values of wetlands with Naturalist Mary Cutler, the unique adaptations of plants to the wetland environment with Carole Lembi Ross (Purdue Botany & Plant Pathology Professor Emerita), and invasive plant species unique to this habitat with Stephanie Frischie (Botanist, Xerces Society). You will get your hands wet, but that is all! Limited to 20.

LOCATIONS:

CBNA (Celery Bog Nature Area): Meet at 1 p.m. at the outdoor amphitheater by LNC.

LNC (Lilly Nature Center): 1620 Lindberg Road, between Northwestern Avenue & McCormick Road, West Lafayette (meeting place for listed LNC carpools).

MARTELL (Martell Forest): Meet at 1 p.m. in the parking lot of Wright Forestry Center at 1007 N 725 W, West Lafayette.

PWA (Purdue Wildlife Area): Meet at 6 p.m. at 8000 IN-26, West Lafayette. Take 26 west across the Purdue Campus; 1/4 mile past 750W, turn right (north) into the gravel drive where the big white pines start (small black and white sign); park at the end of the lane.

STEPHENS (Stephens Forest): Meet at 1 p.m. in the parking area adjacent to property (9613 N 500 W, Delphi) or join the 12:15 p.m. carpool

Easy Peach Cobbler

Ingredients:

Two 15-ounce cans sliced peaches in syrup
1/2 cup (1 stick) butter
1 cup self-rising flour
1 cup sugar
1 cup milk
Homemade Whipped Cream, recipe follows

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Drain 1 can of peaches; reserve the syrup from the other. Place the butter in a 9- by 12-inch ovenproof baking dish. Heat the butter on the stove or in the oven until it's melted. In a medium bowl, mix the flour and sugar. Stir in the milk and the reserved syrup. Pour the batter over the melted butter in the baking dish. Arrange the peaches over the batter. Bake for 1 hour. The cobbler is done when the batter rises around the peaches and the crust is thick and golden brown. Serve warm with fresh whipped cream.

Homemade Whipped Cream:

2 cups whipping cream, chilled in the fridge
4 tablespoons sugar

Chill a large metal mixing bowl and the wire beater attachment in the freezer for about 20 minutes. Pour the chilled cream and sugar into the cold mixing bowl and beat until it forms soft peaks, about 5 minutes. The mixture should hold its shape when dropped from a spoon. Don't overbeat or you'll have sweetened butter! Yield: 4 cups

Cook's Note: If you don't have self-rising flour, substitute 1 cup all-purpose flour mixed with 1 1/2 tsp. baking powder and 1/8 tsp. salt.

~Trisha Yearwood

meeting in the Tippecanoe Battle field parking lot off North 9th Street in Battle Ground.

TIPP BF (Tippecanoe Battlefield): Meet at 1 p.m. at the large picnic area adjacent to the Battlefield Museum off North 9th Street in Battle Ground.

WNC (Wah-ba-shik-a Nature Center): In Battle Ground, at the end of the Battlefield Monument parking lot off North 9th Street.

Gadgets

(continued from back)

a bedding material for worms. It's also available as small pet and poultry bedding. Anything that promotes use of non-toxic recycled materials is a good thing. *PittMoss* is available online at: <https://pittmoss.com>, <https://www.amleo.com>, Amazon, and other vendors.

If you're looking for more ways to reduce your watering tasks this summer, consider self-watering pots. These containers are made in various shapes and sizes, including window boxes and railing planters. They have interior water reservoirs that allow moisture to be drawn up into the potting mix. You do have to add water periodically, but it may be needed only once a week instead of everyday during the hot summer season.

We use 5-gallon self-watering pots for tomatoes, a self-watering *Earth Box* for salad greens, and a couple DIY self-watering pots to grow other veg. These are filled with our own coir and compost peat-free potting mix (based on Monty Don's recipe mentioned in our column last month) and everything is growing really well. We're guessing *PittMoss* might stay too wet in a self-watering container - but that may be an experiment for next year.

July TO-DO List

- MOSQUITO alert: empty water from outdoor containers, pot saucers, etc. Empty and clean bird baths regularly.
- Lift and divide bearded iris.
- Harvest crops regularly. Small to medium summer squash, zucchini, and cucumbers are better than big seedy ones.
- Dig potatoes when the foliage dies, and onions and garlic when the tops turn brown.
- Water vegetables regularly. Avoid blossom-end rot on tomatoes and peppers by maintaining even soil moisture. Melons and cucumbers will be sweeter.

- Start planting transplants of broccoli, cabbage, and other fall crops as space becomes available.
- Prune off tree branches infested with fall webworm. Spray with Bt if defoliation becomes severe.
- Watch for spider mite damage (leaves speckled above, yellow below) especially if the weather has been dry. Conifer needles may look dull gray-green, yellow, or brown. Damage can occur before you even see the little webs.
- Pinch or shear back late summer & fall flowering perennials to encourage branching and more blooms. Mums: last pinching back early to mid July.
- Deadhead spent annuals for continued bloom. Prune roses and flowering shrubs after bloom.
- Water newly planted perennials, shrubs, and trees thoroughly, once a week.
- Apply no fertilizers to trees and shrubs after July 4th. Fertilizing late causes lush growth that's apt to winter kill.
- Fertilize container plants every two weeks with a water-soluble solution.
- Clean and refill hummingbird feeders every 2 or 3 days to prevent growth of harmful bacteria.
- See more tips at: <https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/yardandgarden/july-garden-calendar/>.
- Enjoy your garden!

Don't let perfect be the enemy of good. Gardens are living breathing organisms just like us, imperfect and flawed

Linda Vater

Corn Fritter Caprese with Peaches and Tomatoes

Corn Fritters:

- 1 bunch scallions, thinly sliced
- 3 cups fresh corn kernels (from about 4 ears of corn)
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
- 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red-pepper flakes
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 2 large eggs, whisked
- 1/4 cup half-and-half
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil

Assembly:

- 3 tomatoes, thickly sliced
- 4 peaches, thickly sliced
- 12 ounces fresh mozzarella, thickly sliced
- 1/2 cup basil leaves, roughly torn
- Extra-virgin olive oil, as needed
- Flaky sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. In a large bowl, toss the scallions, corn, parsley, basil, salt, pepper, and red-pepper flakes. Add the flour and baking powder, and toss until the mixture is well combined.
2. Add the eggs and half-and-half and then mix with a spatula until a thick batter forms. Fold in the mozzarella and Parmesan.
3. In a large skillet over medium heat, heat the vegetable oil. While it heats, line a baking sheet with paper towels.
4. When the oil is hot, scoop 1/4-cup portions of batter into the skillet. You'll need to work in batches, cooking just a few at a time. Cook until golden brown, about 3 minutes, then flip and cook until golden on the other side, about 2 to 3 minutes more.
5. When the fritters are cooked, transfer to the prepared baking sheet. Continue until you've used all the batter.
6. To assemble, arrange the corn fritters, tomatoes, peaches, and mozzarella slices on a large platter. Sprinkle basil evenly over the top. Garnish with a generous drizzle of olive oil, flaky salt and freshly ground black pepper.

~Erin McDowell

Great Gadgets and Tools

By Kathryn Reeves and Mike Hathaway

July is a hot month in the garden and often a thirsty month too.

Last summer at the Master Gardener monthly meeting, we did a presentation “Dirty Words: A Guide to Potting Mix for a Sustainable Future.” Included in the talk was a new peat-free water-saving potting mix called *PittMoss*, made from 100% recycled paper products.



Shown is the standard *PittMoss* organic potting mix. Now the company also makes some custom potting mixes with additional fertilizer or blended with peat moss for gardeners who can't quite stop the peat habit.

As a test, we planted two terracotta pots of the same annual Vinca 'Tattoo Tangerine' - one pot was filled with peat-free *PittMoss* and another pot with regular peat-based *ProMix*. Both pots received the same fertilizer. Each Vinca thrived and flowered just the same in both potting mixes. Importantly, *PittMoss* stayed moist much longer than the *ProMix* and it only needed water every 3-4 days instead of every 1-2 days.

YOUR MGATC OFFICERS:

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At the June MG meeting, we were happy to hear Mark Townsend from Cousins Compost mention *PittMoss* as

(continued on page 5)

Garden Beet

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