

May 2020

Garden Beet

MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION OF TIPPECANOE COUNTY



The Latest Spin from D&J

Dee Dee and Jan

By the time this article appears in the *Garden Beet*, two of our monthly meetings were cancelled due to COVID-19. We have truly missed seeing each and every one of you.

With the Expo being cancelled until next year and the Stay-at-Home ordered by our Governor, we hope you have been able to take advantage of this time to work in your own gardens.

Master Gardeners are very creative people; maybe you are designing a formal garden, or maybe something more informal like a cottage garden. There are so many possibilities: Japanese gardens, Mediterranean gardens, gravel and rock gardens, traditional, or prairie and meadow gardens. Possibly you are enlarging your vegetable gardens. Whatever you are doing this spring, we hope you are being safe and following the CDC guidelines for COVID -19.

Master Gardeners is a wonderful organization and together we can make it even better. Each and every one of you plays an important role in fulfilling our mission. If you have any suggestions, comments, or ideas to improve our organization, do not hesitate to contact your Co-Presidents with your ideas.

Please stay safe. Hope to be able to see you all soon.

Jan and Dee Dee

The world's favorite season is the spring. All things seem possible in May

~Edwin Way Teale

A Word from Karen Mitchell

Good morning Master Gardeners,

I hope this finds you well. I would like to provide a few updates:

1. The 2020 Garden Expo has been officially cancelled. We will no longer be trying to postpone or reschedule for this year.
 - a. If you have veggie starts for the Expo, we will be helping to facilitate the donation of these to our own demo and community gardens as well as the Grow Local Sharing Gardens and Food Finders.
 - b. If you have ornamentals, we may have need for them in our display or various gardens. Please email me with the type of plants you would like to donate - mitcheka@purdue.edu
2. Due to cancellations and restrictions associated with COVID-19, all Master Gardener volunteer hour requirements are suspended for 2020. We do not want our volunteers to jeopardize their health or safety through participation in the program.



Programs

**May 5
Cancelled**

**June 2
Cancelled**

For more information on upcoming events, contact Maralee Hayworth at mhaywort@purdue.edu.

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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.tippecanoemastergardener.org>

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



Treasurer's Report

Income for the month of March is mainly from dues and vendors for the Garden Expo for a total of \$174 and expenses for the Native Bee Project, irrigation start up, and refunds for a total of \$512. We will be refunding more of the Garden Expo vendors over the coming weeks. Restricted funds total \$23,232 leaving unrestricted funds for the month at \$23,168. The tax exempt certificate for 2020 and the form for reimbursement are available on the Master Gardener website. If you have any changes to your membership details please send them to me at pmillerathome@comcast.net.

Pat Miller, Treasurer

The love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies

~Gertrude Jekyll

Zesty Sugar Snap Peas

1 pound fresh or frozen sugar snap peas
1/2 cup water
1 T butter
1 garlic clove, minced
3/4 tsp. lemon-pepper seasoning
1/4 tsp. salt

In a skillet, bring peas and water to a boil. Reduce heat. Cover and cook until tender, 6-7 minutes. Drain. Add the remaining ingredients. Cook and stir until well-coated, 2-3 minutes. *74 calories per 3/4 cup.*

~tasteofhome.com

Karen

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3. Working in gardens is still allowed - as long as you are taking precautions and feel safe to do so. Follow these guidelines to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:
 - a. Maintain less than 10 people in the garden at a time. This could mean 10 people in demo and 10 people in display as long as they weren't co-mingling. There haven't been a lot of volunteers working yet, but as the weather warms up, we may implement a sign up sheet for time slots in the garden if needed.
 - b. Do not work in the gardens if you are feeling ill or have been in contact with a person tested positive for COVID-19.
 - c. Follow social distancing guidelines of 6 feet between individuals.
 - d. Wash or sanitize your hands before and after your visit.
 - e. Consider wearing disposable gloves or gloves that can be washed immediately following your visit.
 - f. Bring your own tools if possible. If sharing tools, disinfect before and after use.
4. Purdue has banned all in-person trainings, programs, and events through June 30th.
 - a. They will make a decision on July programs by May 15th.
 - b. Work meetings are allowed of no more than 10 people while following social distancing guidelines.
 - c. We strongly encourage the use of conference calls for team meetings whenever possible. Please let me know if you need help to set up a conference call for any team, committee, or board meetings.
 - d. There are LOTS of online education opportunities right now. Many are posted on the MG website - <https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/continuedhours/>
5. The Tippecanoe County Extension Office will remain closed to the public until further notice. There is a black drop box next to the front door if needed.

Please stay safe and please practice your patience, generosity, and kindness during this difficult time.

Thank you,
Karen Mitchell



The air is like a butterfly
With frail blue wings.
The happy earth looks at the sky
And sings.

~Joyce Kilmer, Spring

Cancellations

Wednesdays in the Wild and more (info from Joan Mohr Samuels)

Because of the many COVID-19-related cancellations/postponements, there will be no April-June issue of *Native Roots* (including the April-June Wednesdays in the Wild flyer). The April-June issue of *Native Roots* is being replaced by update emails to *Native Root* readers.

The Lilly Nature Center continues to be closed; this affects not only *Wednesdays in the Wild* programs, but also WC-INPS (West Central Chapter of Indiana Native Plant Society) programs and SAS (Sycamore Audubon Society) programs. According to Dan Dunten: "We have not made a decision as to when we will open up the Nature Center." It currently is closed until further notice; for more info, please contact Lilly Nature Center Director Dan Dunten at 765-775-5172 or ddunten@westlafayette.in.gov.

To learn about NICHES events, it's best to check the calendar on the NICHES website nicheslandtrust.org/calendar which will be updated with the most current info after the April 28th Board meeting. While activities are in flux during this COVID-19 pandemic, it would probably be a good idea to contact the NICHES office to confirm a calendar event before going to it: 765-423-1605 or niches@nicheslandtrust.org.

RIP Squad workdays are cancelled until further notice. Check with Patty Jones at removeinvasiveplants.wcinpaws@gmail.com or 765-463-3050 for more information.

Wednesdays in the Wild programs are cancelled through June 30th. For more info, contact Lilly Nature Center Director Dan Dunten at 765-775-5172, ddunten@westlafayette.in.gov or Tippecanoe County Naturalist Mary Cutler at 765-567-2993 or mcutler@tippecanoe.in.gov.

Update from Tippecanoe County Naturalist Mary Cutler: Wah-ba-shik-a Nature Center (WNC) did not open this spring and our opening date will be dependent on Tippecanoe County restrictions which have closed county facilities. Outdoor Explore! is cancelled on June 13, but we are working on some Facebook Live sessions to share some of the expertise of our outdoor activity booth experts. These will be advertised via our Outdoor Explore! Facebook page. Also, we hope to provide a smaller "Outdoor Explore! Sampler" event this fall. Details to follow, as the plans unfold. More info from Mary Cutler at 765-567-2993 or mcutler@tippecanoe.in.gov.

Sycamore Audubon Society (SAS) program information contact is Chuck Tuttle 765-586-4806 or chuckt1708@gmail.com. For SAS field trip info: contact Barny Dunning at 765-412-8760 or jdunning@purdue.edu.

Happening

Plant Sales

Native Plants Unlimited sale

May 2-17

Monday-Friday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Saturday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Sunday 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Geist Nursery
9890 Mollenkopf Road
Fishers, Indiana

Message from George Peregrin: To ensure everyone's safety, we have changed our opening date and will be implementing some procedures specific to COVID-19 [such as limiting the number of people in the sale area and asking people to follow protocols listed on the website].

The native plant catalog, sale days, and protocols for COVID-19 can be found at nativeplantsunlimited.com/plant-sale.htm. For more information contact George at 317-607-7343 or george@nativeplantsunlimited.com.

You might consider coming on a day other than the opening weekend. Weekdays typically have far fewer people than the weekends. Note that the opening day has changed to Saturday, May 2nd at 10 a.m.

Prophetstown State Park Native Wildflower & Plant Sale

May 9 • 9a.m. - 3 p.m.

Visitor's Center

4112 East State Road 224
West Lafayette, Indiana

For a plant list or to confirm that the date has not changed, contact Jenna Parks Freeman at 765-320-0503 or jparks@dnr.in.gov. It is best to confirm that this date hasn't changed before going to the sale. More information is available at http://www.in.gov/activecalendar_dnr/EventList.aspx?view=EventDetails&eventidn=27465&information_id=65615&type=&syndicate=syndicate.

Gibson Woods Wild Ones Native Plant Sale

May 16 • 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. (CDT)

IF stay-at-home recommendations have been relaxed.

6201 Parrish Avenue
Hammond, Indiana

Arrive early for the best selection. The sale will be held outside instead of in the building and the number of shoppers at one time will be limited. Instead of waiting in a long line, numbers will be given out at the Gibson Woods entrance gate. You can remain in your vehicle or walk on the trails while waiting for your number to come up. We will wait until the first of May to fine tune and solidify these plans, as CDC and State recommendations will undoubtedly change between now and then. Our first priority is to keep everyone safe! For a plant list and to check the website for up-to-date details go to gw-wildones.org. More information is available from Joy Bower at 219-844-3188 or 219-433-5731.

Gadgets

(continued from back)

rope.) Generously sprinkle your favorite microgreen seeds on the damp mat. Cover the container with another dark tray (or cardboard, layers of newspapers, etc.) to exclude light for several days or more until germination occurs. Check every couple days to see if it needs water. After most of the seeds have germinated, take the lid off and place in a bright spot by a window or under lights to grow on for five to 14 days.



Water the mat as needed to keep it damp until the microgreens reach the desired size. No fertilizer is needed. Shown above: Sprouting Broccoli seeds (from Park Seed) that were sown on 3/24, all germinated by 3/28, and ready for harvest 10 days later. The roots are firmly attached to the mat, so the whole thing can be lifted out for harvesting. Harvest by cutting through the stems with kitchen shears. The microgreens are a totally clean crop, but you can give them a quick rinse with water before adding them to salad, soup, stir-fry and sandwiches.

For microgreen seeds: any edible leafy vegetable or leafy herb seed will work. Herbs, broccoli, kohlrabi, and leafy greens like lettuce, cabbage, herbs, spinach, and many others are good. You will need a shocking number of seeds, so use up old seed or buy in bulk. Johnny's Seeds in Maine sells 100 different varieties of seeds suitable for microgreens, available in small and large bulk quantities. Coated/pelleted seeds did not work for us on these mats, but we may try again if we have leftover seeds.

After harvest, the hemp mat can be tossed in the compost pile. But maybe you're in the same extreme "waste not/want not" mood as we are right now. So we plan to experiment with reusing the mat once or twice more. We'll let all the roots and mat dry out, wash and rinse it, and then microwave it to be sure there are no living roots and no mold. We'll report back if this works.

Almost everything about gardening is relaxing and mood-lifting. (Except the weeds and RABBITS!) At this time especially, everyone needs hopeful and happy activities. Many more folks seem to be growing vegetables this year. Growing your own is uniquely and profoundly comforting. If you have a good garden plot, you're lucky. If you don't and you're planning to grow vegetables in pots this year on your patio, porch, or balcony, you might wonder how big a pot or container you'll need. Or how many vegetable plants can you fit in your pots?

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension has a handy online chart that suggests container sizes for various vegetables as well as varieties that grow well in pots. For example: Broccoli (2 gallons, 1 plant) - *Packman, Bonanza, and others*; Cucumber (1 gallon, 1 plant) - *Burpless, Liberty, Early Pik, Crispy, Salty*; Tomato (5 gallons, 1 plant) - *Patio, Pixie, Tiny Tim, Saladette, Toy Boy, Spring Giant, Tumbling Tom, Small Fry*. See more at: <https://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/solutions/container-gardening/>.

Not to disagree too much with Texas A&M, but we've successfully grown Tiny Tim Tomatoes in one-gallon pots. Tumbling Tom and other truly dwarf tomatoes can also be grown in smaller pots. We suggest putting two dwarf plants in a 5 gallon pot. We also suggest growing small leafy greens or annual herbs like basil along the edge in very large pots around a tomato or pepper plant. The leafy greens like lettuce or

Toy Choy Pak Choi will be harvested before the tomato plants get very large.

Grow flowers to support pollinators, increase your harvest and lift your spirits.

May TO-DO List:

- ◇ Deadhead daffodils, tulips, and other spring bulbs to prevent seed formation and allow bulbs to regain their flowering strength for next spring.
- ◇ Place plant supports this month around perennial plants after spring bulbs are finished blooming but before you remove the foliage to avoid spearing bulbs.
- ◇ Sharpen mower blades. Set mower high.
- ◇ Prune early spring-flowering shrubs and trees after they bloom.
- ◇ Start to harvest early leaf crops, radishes, and asparagus.
- ◇ Plant warm season flowers and vegetables when the soil warms up and all danger of frost is past.
- ◇ See tips for indoor and outdoor gardening from Rosie Lerner at: <https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/yardandgarden/gardening-calendar-may/>.
- ◇ While you're digging and planting, pause to enjoy sunlight and warm breezes.

Cucumber Tea Sandwiches

- 12 very thin slices of firm white bread
- 1 5.3 ounce container semisoft cheese with garlic and fine herbs
- 2 cups thinly sliced cucumbers
- 6 radishes, thinly sliced
- 3/4 cup fresh basil, dill or oregano

Spread bread slices with cheese. Top with cucumbers, radishes and herbs. Sprinkle with freshly ground black pepper and sea salt. Makes 12 servings. 112 calories per serving.

~bhg.com, Better Homes & Gardens

A Walk Down Memory Lane!



Great Gadgets and Tools

By Kathryn Reeves and Mike Hathaway

Looking for green products that are OMRI approved? Our new favorite medium for growing microgreens checks both boxes. Hemp felt mats are a great alternative to peat-based seed starter mix and are made especially for growing microgreens - those ultra-nutritious vegetables that are ultra-expensive to buy at the grocery. Hemp mats are made from the fibrous byproducts of the hemp industry. Rather than discarding this fiber as a waste product, growers developed hemp mats for growing greens and herbs.



These mats were originally made in very large sheets for large-scale hydroponic greens and microgreen production and in 10"x20" sheets to fit standard plastic flats for market farmers. You can buy a kit with a black flat, clear cover, and several sheets of hemp felt mat (shown below). If you already have a bunch of flats, you can also find just the sheets in packs of 6 or more. We cut the sheets down to fit smaller containers. (Stouffer's frozen lasagna comes in a perfect little black tray - shown above.)



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Using these mats couldn't be simpler. Soak the hemp mat in warm or cold water until it is completely saturated, then drain off excess water. (Don't be surprised if the aroma is like old wet

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