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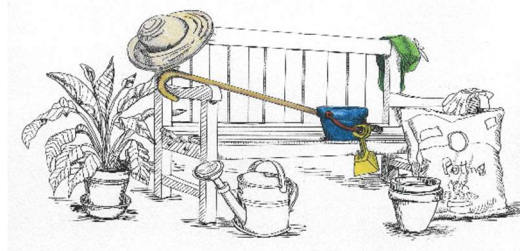
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HENDRICKS GARDENER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
HENDRICKS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS



President's Message

At last, spring finally seems to be here, an exciting time for gardeners, although spring 2020 is one we all will remember. This year we have more than the typical "weather weeds" of spring, we have an "invasive" haunting us, and we all need to do our part to eradicate it. If you find yourself with extra time this spring, look around and cheer up! The trees are budding, plants are popping up everywhere, and grass is turning green. Mother Nature is waking up, and she is truly amazing to behold.

I'm sure everyone shares my disappointment that our events have been cancelled or postponed. As you know, Purdue has cancelled or postponed all events and face-to-face interactions until May 17. One thing you likely don't miss is my cowbell--I fear it's getting rusty and I'm not allowed to use it in the house.

Even during these uncertain times, our members are still planning for the future. GFAA has been rescheduled to June 27, and event chairs Kim and Steve Somermeyer are re-planning this event as it's now a summer rather than a spring garden show. Thus far, all GFAA sponsors are staying with us, along with about 75% of our vendors. Barb Pantos is planning our May Plant Sale and Auction on May 19. Other committees are continuing their work via phone and email. Hopefully, we'll be able to move forward with these events, but the health and welfare of the community and members comes first, thus we'll continually evaluate based on the most recent information and recommendations.

This summer, we'll need Master Gardeners to host Open Gardens. As you get out and maybe have a little extra time in your gardens, please consider hosting. Gardens need not be show quality; any garden or landscape is always a work in progress. The point is to share your ideas, plantings and accomplishments with fellow Master Gardeners. Date and time are at your convenience. If interested, please let Sara Fenton know.

Lastly, please take care of yourselves and others. Gardening is great therapy, but social interaction is just as important. Stay in touch and check up on fellow MGs, friends and family via phone, text or email. HCMG is a strong organization, and we'll get through this. Look on the positive side, for some of us this is providing the time we haven't had, so take advantage of a slower moving world. Stay safe and well!

Steve Pearl, President

Upcoming HCMG Meetings

At press time, the next scheduled HCMG event is our annual plant sale and auction on Tuesday, May 19 at the Hendricks Co. Fairgrounds. From 3 to 6 p.m., the committee will be setting up and plants may be dropped off. The sale begins at 6 p.m., and the auction will begin at 7 p.m. This year's sale will feature two mystery auctioneers, which should be fun and entertaining! Proceeds from the sale help fund the HCMG scholarship program.

As the weather warms, please consider digging up a variety of HEALTHY plants and moving them to appropriately sized garden containers. Label them with their scientific name, common name, ideal growing conditions, perennial or annual, bloom time and height. Pictures are helpful. There will be dedicated native species tables this year so indicate if your plant qualifies. If you have a rare plant, note this on the ID tag. Plants listed as invasive can't be accepted.

Barb Pantos, event chair, is requesting volunteers and refreshments; sign up on the Master Gardener Management Page under Volunteer Registration. Questions? Please contact Barb (barbpantos@gmail.com).

Online Education Opportunities

Social distancing doesn't mean you can't continue learning. Consider watching a webinar at www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/continuedhours/. Upon completion, you can report it via MG Manager by listing the title in the description box. You may complete more than one.

Adventures in Gardening

The AIG Committee has booked Simon Davies to discuss backyard rain gardens. More details to come, but mark your calendar for October 10.

Gardening for Butterflies

We began our love of butterflies as toddlers, with net in hand chasing after a fluttering butterfly as it went from flower to flower. When the butterfly paused, we captured it! Carefully, we looked at the colors and patterns on the wings. They were awesome; no wonder butterflies are called flying jewels.

To welcome more of these amazing insects to your garden, think about providing food, water and a place for shelter and protection, and forgoing pesticides.

To start, pick a sunny open area, then plant lots of flowers that bloom spring to fall to provide nectar for the butterflies. Nectar sources for an adult butterfly are not necessarily the same plant that the caterpillars eat. You need special food "host plants" for the caterpillars. Mother butterfly lays her eggs only on the host plant leaves specific to that butterfly species (example Monarch on milkweed). She places the eggs on the bottom of a leaf hidden from predators. The egg hatches and the larvae eat the leaves before making a chrysalis and turning into an adult butterfly. Check www.monarchwatch.org/garden/bfly.htm for a list of host plants for each butterfly species.

Water can be provided in a shallow dish with water and flat stones, a depression filled with sand kept moist, or even a nice mud puddle. Shelter and protection is simply a place to hide from wind, rain and predators. Your shrubs, a brush pile and evergreens all fulfill this purpose. Butterflies that hibernate over winter can use a leaf or mulch pile, tree cavities, log mounds and crevices in tree trunks.

Here are some interesting facts about butterflies.

- A butterfly's egg is about as big as a period on a printed page.
- A butterfly can't live on sugar alone. They sip from mud puddles for minerals and salts and get amino acids from carrion.
- Butterflies are cold blooded and don't fly at 55 degrees or colder. Give them a rock to sun on so they can warm up their flight muscles for the day.
- A butterfly can fly with half a wing.
- Butterflies can see a range of ultraviolet colors invisible to the human eye.
- Butterflies are the number two pollinators.
- Indiana has 150 butterfly species.

If you provide conditions for the complete butterfly life cycle, you're likely to have butterflies spend generation after generation in your garden. Your garden will be a butterfly garden!

-- Colletta Kosiba

Upcoming Dates to Remember

TBA • Biggest Little Farm Movie Screening

May 19 • HCMG Plant Sale & Auction

June 27 • Gardening for All Ages

July 28 • HCMG Picnic

September 10 • 2020 Purdue Extension Master Gardener State Conference

September 18 and 19 • Outdoor Learning Center Native Plant Sale

October 10 • Adventures in Gardening