

Eau Claire Area Master Gardener News



February 2018



Photo by Carol Cox

Beaver Creek Reserve Continues To Grow And Innovate

by Carol Cox

On January 15, 2018, the Eau Claire Area Master Gardeners (ECAMG) and friends again had the opportunity to hear Eric Kessler, Director at Beaver Creek Reserve (BCR), give an update on all the things that are going on out at the BCR.

BCR began in 1946 as a youth camp when the GIs came back from the war. At that time there was 160 acres, which has now expanded to 400.3 acres of land.

The facility is used by 4-Hers, Girl Scouts, church camps, the YMCA, Sons of Norway and many others for retreats and events, and the Reserve pulls participants from a 90-mile radius, which is rather amazing. In addition, a number of organizations, such as the Chippewa Valley Astronomy Society, the Scouts, a Quilting Club and a school all utilize the facilities on an ongoing basis.

And volunteers are a tremendous asset to BCR with individuals and groups putting in over 14,000 volunteer hours this last year. That helped accomplish some \$50,000 in projects and had a \$5.3 million overall value for BCR.

Last year the Wise Nature Center was upgraded and trails were improved. A new parking lot was done which addressed safety issues. The Reserve still wants to maintain the natural environment and so is landscaping around the new parking area utilizing native trees, plants and grasses. This is an area of opportunity for volunteers to help with also.

BCR is also constantly looking to upgrade to more environmentally friendly components. Recently a donor gave money for the installation of 141 solar panels for the Nature Center. This is all LED lighting and is 100% solar powered in the Nature Center. They are also now able to lease additional solar panels from the Eau Claire Energy Coop so that the entire BCR operation is now solar. Check out the BCR website to learn more details.

In addition, BCR boasts the third largest telescope this side of the Mississippi River for public viewing. That observatory has also now has updated electrical and a new metal roof and is open from May through October. Go out sometime this summer and do a little stargazing. You will be amazed at what you see there.

Another area of BCR is the Citizen Science Center. Presently the Center is working with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and is involved in work on invasive species. They have been involved with over \$1.3 million in grants since 2006 and thereby are reaching out into the community.

And, of course, there is Larry Bennett and the bluebird house construction. Check that out also when you are out there.

Wildlands Charter School also does project based learning utilizing the facilities at the BCR. Some 60 students attend that school. (Continued on page 7)

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Local Master Gardener News

Changing e-mail? Moving?

If you do, **please** remember to notify the ECAMG and the newsletter editor of your new e-mail address and/or mailing address so you don't miss any Eau Claire Area Master Gardener happenings!

Email your new information to Carol Cox at c7w6c2200@charter.net or notify her by snail mail at 1908 Hogeboom Ave., Eau Claire, WI 54701 (or call her at 715-783-0016 - cell).



Bulletin Board Postings Stories and Opportunities!!!!



ECAMGA Board

ECAMGA BOARD MEMBER CONTACT INFO		
Name	E-mail address	Phone number
Erin LaFaive	Erin.lafaive@ces.uwex.edu	715-839-4712
Mary Jane Griffin	mgriffinhlaa@gmail.com	715-835-6979
Dick Lienhardt	dicklienhardt@yahoo.com	715-286-9917
Paula Bonnin	paula.d.bonnin@gmail.com	715-220-6373
Ede Strand	edestrand@aol.com	715-8326775
Jerry Richards	richardsleeann@hotmail.com	715-456-7232
Carla Pelzl	jcpelzl@gmail.com	715-835-6628
Nina Logan	ninalogan@centurylink.net	715-878-4585
Ellen Terwilliger	terwilset@gmail.com	715-839-0731
Lori Kempen	lorikempen@charter.net	715-832-8088

NOTE: The ECAMGAV Board minutes may be accessed at <https://eauclairemastergardeners.weebly.com/ecamg-board.html>.

Beaver Creek Reserve Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator To Speak To Master Gardeners

On February 19, 2018, A.J. Leiden, Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator for Beaver Creek will be speaking about invasive species in our lakes and streams.

He will help us identify these species, and how they arrived in our area waterways. Some of these plants and animals have even come from as far away as the Asian seas by way of ships ballasts, which is then emptied in our lakes. A.J. will discuss prevention and ways to make our waterways cleaner.

The event will begin at 6:30 pm at the Eau County Extension Office, 227 W First St., Altoona. Snacks and door prizes will be offered. The event is open to the public so bring a friend or two and come learn about what we can do to control invasive species in our lakes, streams and waterways.



*ECAMGAV
2018 Calendar*

*All meetings at
NW-Extension Office unless
otherwise noted*

- February 3:** ECAMGA Winter Garden Seminar at CVTC.
- February 19:** A.J. Leiden, speaking on aquatic invasive species
- March:** Mary Jackson – MG on permaculture
- April:** Chef LaLaine Gunem, Asian edible plants & cooking w/ them
- May:** Jim Schwiebert, on wild edibles
- June:** David Schmitt of Haycreek Outfitters on “The Nature of Bears”
- July:** Garden Tours TBA
- September:** State WIMGA conference in Eau Claire
- October 1:** MGV Hours due in
- October 7:** Annual Photo Contest entries due
- November:** Election of new board members
- December 17:** Annual Holiday Party

Upcoming Events & Other Things

MARCH 1 through 31

Tree & Birdhouse

SALE



Proceeds support the Chippewa Rod & Gun Club
and the Lake Wissota Garden Club

Order Forms Online Starting March 1
at www.rodngun.org or
www.lakewissotagardenclub.weebly.com

Think Spring Garden Seminar



Saturday
February 17, 2018
8 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Avalon Hotel &
Conference Center
1009 W. Park Avenue
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729

Keynote Speaker: Jim Beardsley,
"The Ten Commandments of Growing Roses"

Other Breakout Speakers/Presentations:

P.J. Liesch: Unwanted Visitors: Emerald Ash Borers and Other Invasive Pests

Mary Stewart: Successfully Growing & Maintaining Orchids

Faye Ryszkiewicz: Split Log Succulent Garden Workshop

Jim Beardsley: Chemical Safety for the Garden

Kristen Kelm: Tick Illness and Prevention

Jerry Clark: Weather & Climate Determines What We Can Grow &
How Well It Grows

Matt Staudenmaier: Eau Claire's Trees – Past, Present, and Future

Mary Stewart: Repotting Orchids (Demonstration)

Cost: \$30 before Feb. 7 - \$35 thereafter. The Workshop is an extra \$25.00. To register and for more information call the Chippewa County UW- Extension Office at 715-726-7950



Beaver Creek Reserve
S1 County Road K
Fall Creek, WI 54742
Phone: 715-877-2212

Winter Tracking For Kids

Two sessions: 9:30 a.m. to 11:30
am and 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 pm

Did you ever go out in the morning and notice all the tracks under the birdfeeder or next to the shrub and wonder who had been there? Kids can come to this program and learn some of the detective work it takes to figure out the answers. If conditions allow, children will take a short walk outdoors, guided by a naturalist, to look for tracks and identify who may have passed that way. Class includes making a plaster cast of a wild animal track to take home. Please bring boots, gloves and warm clothing for outdoor exploration! Recommended for kids 8 and up. **Required chaperone is free.**

Registration and full payment required by Feb. 14. Cost: \$7.00 members and \$10.00 non-members. **Registration ends: FEBRUARY 14TH**

For more info, call 715-839-4712

Classes:



Thursday, February 15th & 22nd at 3:00 pm
& Saturday, February 24 at 10:00 AM & 2pm

Hanging Basket Workshop: Break away from winter and come plant your very own custom hanging basket in the greenhouse! We will be planting baby plants in your hanging basket. Then DTE will care for your baskets until they are ready to go outside. You'll be able to pick up your baskets in May to take home and enjoy. You're welcome to stop in and check on their status as they grow. **Cost: \$50 per basket, everything is included.**



6025 Arndt Lane
Eau Claire WI, 54701
715-833-1234

E-mail - home@dwntoearth.com

<http://www.dwntoearth.com/index2.html>.

2018 WIMGA Conference Registration Starts In February

Join with Master Gardener Volunteers and interested gardeners from around Wisconsin for a fun filled and educational two days in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

The autumn at the River garden conference will be held at the Lismore Hotel located at the confluence of the Chippewa and Eau Claire Rivers. On Friday you have four options of area horticultural attractions and an evening dinner and keynote talk. Saturday morning we will start our conference by visiting the Eau Claire farmers market to learn about its history and how it works. From there we will have a delightful array of speakers to choose from. Both online registration and paper registration will be available by February 3rd. Go to <https://www.wimgaconferences.com/> for information and registration.

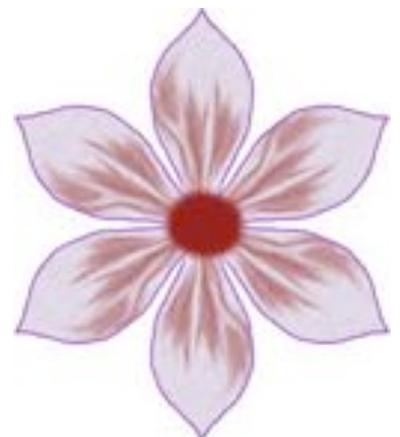
A brochure for mail-in registration will be available online as well as at the UW-Extension office in Altoona. The 2018 WIMGA Conference is hosted by Barron, Chippewa, Dunn, Eau Claire & St. Croix Valley MGVA associations.



Want a quick and cheap watering device?

Try this one that was on <http://ajourneytoadream.blogspot.com/2012/03/helpful-yet-simple-diy-for-spring.html>.

They used a hot needle to produce the holes. I think a fine drill bit would work just as well and take less effort.



Bits and Pieces



EYE CANDY



Special effects photo by Dana Cox -

Looking for some ideas for this summer for trellising vining crops or flowering vines? Check out this website for some possibilities:

<https://www.apieceofrainbow.com/21-diy-trellis-structures/>.

The site also has info on growing tomatoes in small spaces.



21 Garden Trellis Structures

www.apieceofrainbow.com



Shades of hobbits and Middle Earth and all that stuff!

What an interesting way to “decorate” a tree in your yard. This idea is courtesy of Pinterest and would add a touch of whimsy to

Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be bent out of shape!
-Anonymous



It's the bee's knees or something like that. Check out how to make this at:
<https://www.bakerross.co.uk/craft-ideas/kids/solitary-bees-hotel>.

BCR Innovation continued from page

Much work has been done to upgrade the cabins and campsites at the Reserve. In addition a garage was added to the caretaker's area and the caretaker's house was repainted.

A highlight of the year and a fundraiser for BCR is the annual Native Plant Sale. This raises around \$9,000 for BCR. It is volunteer run and also provides a source of native plants for use at BCR as well as an opportunity for area residents and gardeners to purchase native plants.

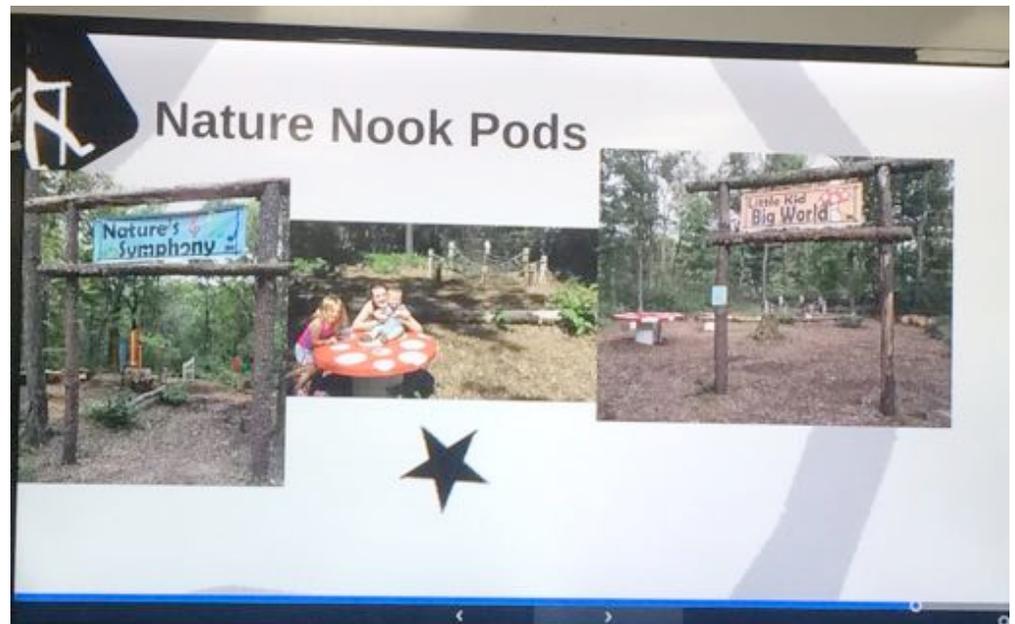
Eric indicated that almost 5,000 people visit the Butterfly House, which is open from July to September. The first Sunday in August BCR also holds its annual Butterfly Fest, which draws lots of families and individuals.

Additional attractions at the BCR include the Nature Nook Pods, the Toddler Picnic Area all located along some 9 miles of trails.

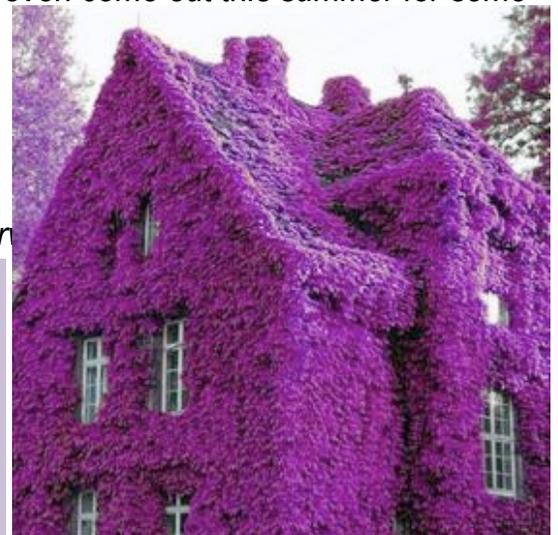
Summer is not the only time the Reserve is a hopping. There is skiing and winter activities during the colder months. Some \$13,000 in new ski equipment have been donated to BCR by Shields this past year and, if you don't own your own equipment but want to ski, you can rent the gear for as low as \$3 per day.

The BCR is open year around with programs and attractions for all ages. The goal is to educate people about the natural environment around them. Not only are there onsite programs, workshops and classes but also some offsite program tours are offered. A number of retreats are also available, birding hikes, classes on wild edibles, and maple syrup making are all to be found out at BCR. Shields also donated kayaks so you can even come out this summer for some kayaking. Or sign up to volunteer. This is an amazing 70 year-old grassroots place to enjoy nature in an educational and fun environment. See you there soon!!

After the meeting door prizes were awarded and snacks were available. The next meeting, on February 19th will feature a speaker on Invasive species in our streams and water



***“An obstacle is something you see when you take your eyes off the goal.
- Anonymous***



Talk about a “garden house.” Maybe this is a bit too much of a good thing. Picture compliments

Ah, winter is Past!

**Ah, winter is past!
"How so," say you.
"When snow covers the ground
And February's chill abounds?"**

**Why, 'tis the spirit of the thing.
I feel it within.
winter's back is broken.
The lengthening days, spring betokens!**



(Editor's note: After February 16, no more 24/7 likelihood of below zero weather all day! And, slowly but surely, the days are getting longer so that around the time of the equinox we gain daylight the quickest. About now we pick up close to 3 minutes of sunlight per day. Over the course of the month of March we will gain 86 minutes of daylight. By the end of the month, the sun won't be setting until almost 7:30pm. And, the garden seminars start. SO, THINK SPRING!

EAU CLAIRE AREA MASTER GARDENER NEWSLETTER
A newsletter for the Eau Claire Area Master Gardener Association members.

Unless otherwise noted, articles for this newsletter are submitted and/or written by ECAMGA members or the newsletter editor, Carol W. Cox. Unless otherwise noted, graphics are from clipart. Newsletter layout by Carol W. Cox



For more Eau Claire County UW Cooperative Extension information go to our website:
www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/eauc Claire
Phone: 715-839-4712
Fax: 715-839-6277
M-F 8AM-5PM



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**Eau Claire County
Extension Office
227 First Street West
Altoona, WI 54720**