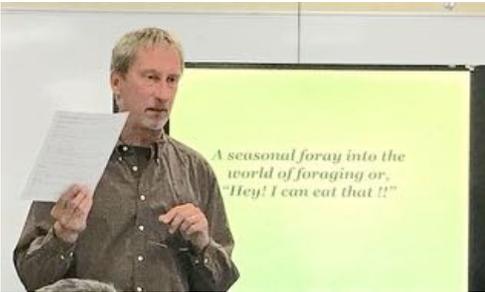


# Eau Claire Area Master Gardener News



June 2018



## Beaver Creek Reserve Naturalist Takes Master Gardeners Into The World Of Foraging!

Could you live off the land? Balance your diet with what you find in the forest or field? Well, maybe you wouldn't want to go quite that far but naturalist Jim Schwiebert gave Master Gardeners and their guests an intriguing look into the world of wild edibles and the art of foraging. The meeting, held on Monday, May 21<sup>st</sup> at the UW-Eau Claire Extension Office, gave those present the chance to explore just that plus sample some of Jim's finds.

"So many people are afraid of stuff out in the woods, yet, years ago that was their supermarket." An interesting concept portrayed by Schwiebert. Jim also told those present that he "doesn't like to eat yucky stuff either. He actually enjoys much of what he forages out of the woods and fields.

The key to successful foraging, according to Schwiebert, is to "Know your plants." This is the "Golden Rule" of foraging. And you should not just be satisfied to know the common names (the same common name can, often, be attached to different plants) but know their scientific name. In addition, the naturalist warned, "Never eat a plant or any part of a plant unless you are 100 percent sure of what the plant is and what parts are edible." However, most plants, short of water hemlock, which will kill you, most wild plants, unless consumed in huge quantities probably are not going to kill you. Some, though, will make you sick.

Some interesting information concerning edibles:

- "common" nightshade berries are edible.
- Belladonna, which is a very similar plant but with distinct differences, is not edible and is poisonous.
- Quantities – when you start foraging don't eat large quantities of anything. Try just a little at first to see how you react to the plant.

So, why even bother with foraging? Well, for one thing many of these wild plants have high nutritional value. Wild blackberries, and elderberries are an extremely high source of vitamin A. Likewise, many other wild plants are very high in nutrient content.

Schwiebert also spent some time discussing various mushrooms. Again, one needs to know their plants as there are certain mushrooms that are extremely poisonous. Jim's advice was to stay away from the gilled mushrooms.

After a question and answer period door prizes were awarded and, along with some really delicious treats, participants were given a chance to taste some of the "edibles" that Jim had brought with him. If you missed the fun, plan to bring a friend for the July events (with the plant sale coming up in June there will not be an educational meeting in June) but come July, ECAMGAVs will be looking forward to garden tours. Watch for times and dates to be announced.

*Pictures by Jo-Ann Clark*



*Ramps anyone? FYI that is a wild onion.*



*Taste and see – you just might like it!!*



*Recommended reading if you are going to eat in the woodlands and prairies!*



## Local Master Gardener News

Changing e-mail? Moving?

If you do, please remember to notify the ECAMGA 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](mailto: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!!!**

**MGV**

## ECAMGA Board

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

### Note:

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

## The Teaching Garden

The raised bed Teaching Garden at the Extension Building **needs your help**. During two work sessions this past week, amendments were added to the beds, and the ground around them was mulched. We hope to plant vegetables and flowers after Memorial Day, as weather allows. Please watch for emails from Andy Heren with work session details.

Once planting is done, **we will need help with keeping the gardens watered**. We need folks who can spare an hour one or two days a week or over weekends. It's an easy way to pick up regular volunteer hours, and you'll enjoy seeing how quickly the plants fill in and start producing. Please help us keep that busy corner looking great. Promote your county Extension program and the community involvement of our Master Gardener Volunteers.

If you can help, or have questions, we look forward to hearing from you.

Carla Pelzl  
MGV  
715-835-6628  
Or email [jcpelzl@gmail.com](mailto:jcpelzl@gmail.com)



## ECAMGVA

### 2018 Calendar

*All meetings at Extension Office  
unless otherwise noted*

- June 10:** MG Plant Sale in conjunction with the Hosta Society at Phoenix Park
- June 18:** There will be **no June "educational meeting"** because speaker canceled and the plant sale will be held.
- July:** Garden Tours TBA
- August:** MG meeting - TBA
- September 17:** MG meeting - TBA
- September 21-22:** State WIMGA conference in Eau Claire
- September 30:** MGV Hours due in to the UW-Extension Office
- October 7:** Annual Photo Contest entries due
- October 15:** MG meeting - TBA
- November 19:** Election of new board members
- December 17:** Annual Holiday Party



## Events



**ECAMGA And  
NWS PLANT SALE  
JUNE 10 2018  
10am-1pm  
Phoenix Park**

The sale is in less than two weeks away. We will be setting up at 7 a.m. If you can help with set up or help with the plant sale, it would be appreciated.

Spring is finally here. It is time to split and pot up your plants for sale. We will sell annuals such as flowers, herbs, vegetables plants, house plants, perennials and hopefully native plants. Please prune and pot your houseplants in the appropriate size pot. **Please mark your plants with its type, name and sun requirements.** If you can, please add a picture of the blooming plant. Customers will pay more if they know what it is. **Please plant your plants in sterile (bagged) soil** in order to avoid jumping worms. **If you know that you have Jumping Worms in your yard, please do not donate any plants from your yard.**

**Does anyone have any signs that we could use for the sidewalk the day of the plant sale?** Please email me at [mgriffinhlaa@gmail.com](mailto:mgriffinhlaa@gmail.com) or call/text me at 715-590-3742. If you can bring a 4, 6 or 8-foot table the day of the sale, it would be appreciated. Please put your name on the table. All tables will be covered with plastic.

Please save **small** cardboard containers and bring them the day of the sale.

We will be selling gently used garden items and garden art. We will put magazines out on a table for free. **NO BOOKS!**

We have posters and takeaways at the extension office. Please pick some up and help us to get the word out about our Plant Sale. Judy Wibel has set up the Facebook page about the Plant Sale so please invite (liking and sharing the page with) your friends and ask them to invite friends.

**Remember:** The time that you take to help, pot, put up posters, gather donations, etc. all counts as volunteer hours. Please keep track of them.

See you at the Plant Sale!

Mary Jane Griffin and Susan Merton  
Plant Sale Co-Chairs

**Upper Midwest Regional  
Extension Master Gardener  
Volunteer  
2018 Conference  
Minnesota Arboretum  
June 14 - 16.**

**Our Plants, Our Planet,  
Our Volunteers**

Experience empowering speakers, enhance your horticulture knowledge, attend exclusive workshops, network with your peers, and explore ways to inspire and engage your community in sustaining a healthy planet, through healthy plants, for healthy people.

All the information regarding speakers and the program can be found at <http://www.arboretum.umn.edu/EMGConference2018.aspx>.

### REMEMBER...

September 21-22 is the Wisconsin Master Gardener Conference in Eau Claire.

### SIGN UP FOR...

Fun tours, great speakers, and the **early bird** price of \$105 is good until **July 9th**. The Lismore will be serving three wonderful meals for that price. Hear Mark Dwyer of Rotary Gardens and Ben Futa of Allen Centennial Gardens. **Watch for an opportunity to sign up to volunteer.**

We need lots of help during the conference. Judy Wibel will send out an email for online sign-up. A chance for lots of education hours and to get together with gardeners from all over the state. Sign up online at: <https://www.wimgaconferences.com>.

The website has brochures that you can print out for registration and info.

**If only closed minds came with closed mouths!  
- anonymous**



Eau Claire  
*Gardens  
in Bloom*  
Presented by the Eau Claire Garden Club

*July 14, 2018*  
9am - 4pm  Tickets - \$15<sup>00</sup>

<p><b>Tour Nine Area Gardens</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monarch Butterfly &amp; Native Plant Gardens</li> <li>• Woodland Fantasy Garden</li> <li>• Professionally Landscaped Garden</li> <li>• A Neighborhood of Unique Garden Styles and a Community Prairie Restoration Garden</li> <li>• Sustainable No-till Heirloom Vegetable Garden</li> </ul>	<p><b>The Garden Marketplace</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monarch Kits and Seeds</li> <li>• Garden Art</li> <li>• Plant Sale</li> <li>• Musicians</li> <li>• Lunch "By the Pond" with food available from Expo Bistro 11am - 4pm</li> </ul>
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Tickets are available after June 1st at the three Eau Claire Festival Foods, on the [eauclairegardensclub.com](http://eauclairegardensclub.com) Website, or at the garden tour locations on July 14th.



### An Imelda Marcos Idea? Maybe!



Well, maybe the birds would not be to happy with Imelda Marcos expensive, high heeled shoes but they certainly could use an old loafer or boot to nest in and raise their young in.

Just pause before throwing out those old shoes and nail one to a tree for your feathered friend's use.

Just another idea for a cute birdhouse courtesy of Pinterest's very interesting website.

### Classes



**Saturday, June 9 at 10:00 a.m.: Landscaping 101** – This will be a beginner's class on how to plan, layout, and install your own landscaping designs. If you are wondering where to start, we can help you.

**Saturday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10:00 a.m.: Landscaping 201** - We will cover additional landscape design principles including foundation plantings, edging installation, and the pros and cons of using mulch vs. rock. We will also go over how to determine what type of soil you have, provide tips on what plants to use, how to plant, and how to incorporate boulders into your design.

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

E-mail: [home@dwntoearth.com](mailto:home@dwntoearth.com)



**Plants for Pollinators:  
Creating a Pollinator's Paradise  
June 23, 2018 – 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Schmeckle Reserve  
2419 Northpoint Drive  
Stevens Point, WI 54481**

Join Sophie Demchik, lecturer at the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point, on an exploration of bees, plants, and the plants bees need. During this day-long workshop, you will learn bee and plant identification as well as how to identify the plant characteristics important to bees. By the end of the workshop, you will have a better understanding of what plants to plant and more importantly, what combinations of plants to plant and where.

This workshop will include several walking tours of ideal pollinator habitat. Travel to the various field sites is included in the registration fee along with lunch. More information on this workshop can be found on our website: <https://www.uwsp.edu/conted/Pages/Plants-for-pollinators.aspx>.

Cost: \$55/\$49 for UWSP LIFE members

For more information also, you may contact Haley Frater at 715-346-4176 or email [hfrater@uwsp.edu](mailto:hfrater@uwsp.edu).

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



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

**Breeding Bird Atlas Blitz  
June 5, 14, and 22, 2018  
7:00 -11:00 am  
(Must register for each session separately)**



Bird nesting season is almost here! Come join us for a Breeding Bird Atlas Blitz as we spend the day searching the Reserve to record as many breeding birds as possible. The Breeding Bird Atlas is a five-year citizen science project that aims to map the distribution and abundance of all bird species breeding in WI.

Along with contributing to a massive statewide citizen science project, you will have the exciting opportunity to learn how to recognize bird courtship, nesting behavior, and to watch the birds as they prepare for the arrival of their young. You will gain knowledge about bird behavior that will be sure to make each of your nature walks from that day forward even more fun and interesting!

Registration required by June 4 for each date separately.



## Bits & Pieces

### Blue Fescue by Carol Cox



Blue Fescue (*Festuca glauca*) is a perennial grass that is

versatile in the garden landscape. It has a gorgeous blue color that lasts through the summer and into fall. The grass is a clump-forming plant that can be used for mass plantings but also in containers and many other situations. This grass blooms in late summer sending up feathery bloom stalks.

The plant is also very drought tolerant. It will grow in part-sun to sun and, depending upon variety, grows anywhere from 6 inches tall to 3 feet tall with a clump width of 6-18 inches.

Another plus for this grass is that it is not favored by deer and it attracts birds. It would be considered a low maintenance perennial that grows in zones 4-8. The plant also will add texture and color when it is used in containers and it is noninvasive which makes it great for an edging plant.

It is also a fairly drought-tolerant once mature, but be sure to water new plants adequately to get them established. Ideally these plants like well-drained and evenly moist soils for a consistent blue color. Planting this grass in full sun will achieve the brightest blue colors. The more shade, the greener the color.

Bearing a mounded shape, it is a type of ornamental grass that stays shorter than many others. It usually reaches a bit less than 1 foot tall; it grows to be typically a little less than 1 foot wide. Do not confuse this ornamental grass with tall fescue, which is often found in lawns. Blue fescue is a cool-season grass and does most of its growing during the spring and the fall. In our zone 4 climate, shear back the plants to a few inches from the ground in the fall to allow for new growth in spring. Since this is a fairly short-lived perennial, regularly dividing the plants into smaller pieces will prolong the life of the plant and prevent it from drying out in the middle and looking unsightly.

'Elijah Blue' is probably the best known and most widely grown cultivar but others include: 'Blue Finch,' 'Blue Fox,' 'Blue Glow,' 'Caesia,' 'Sea Urchin,' and two additional cultivars that are rather different. These are 'Tom Thumb' and 'Harz.' 'Tom Thumb' grows to be only 4 inches tall. 'Harz' has blades of an olive-green color, with a hint of purple at times. Whatever cultivar one might select, blue fescue is a grass worth considering for the garden landscape.

Am I being repetitious, or what? This picture is a good example of the use of repetition in a garden bed. Even better, repeat the feature in odd numbers (3, 5, 7, etc. plants) for an even better effect.



"Beauty surrounds us, but usually we need to be walking in a garden to know it."  
-Rumi



*(Editor's note: I enjoy finding ideas where one picture and my own imagination are all I need to replicate the item.*

*Here are some ideas that are cute or useful and also allow for the recycling of other objects.*

*An old pill bottle recycled to a plant marker and an old door becomes a trellis (and down below another old door turns into a bench for the garden). A child's old boot becomes a whimsical birdhouse while a pair of cheap latex gloves serves as a mold for a cute succulent planter.*

*Even an old shirt and some concrete sludge can create a piece of garden art!*

*And what about those minions? (We could all use a few minions in our gardens!) All that is needed is some pots, a bit of blue and yellow paint and a little time and you will have your own garden minions.*

*(All items are from [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)).*





### How Doth the Little Busy Bee

by Isaac Watts

How doth the little busy bee  
Improve each shining hour,  
And gather honey all the day  
From every opening flower!

How skillfully she builds her cell!  
How neat she spreads the wax!  
And labors hard to store it well  
With the sweet food she makes.

*Photo by Dana Cox*

#### 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](http://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**