



Digging It!

All the Dirt from the Allen County Master Gardeners
October 2023

Notes from Joanne

Just a few short weeks and we will begin to pack up the garden and put it to bed for winter. I am sad to see things starting to die off and I am glad the frost is hold off. I love the fall foliage and the low humidity, but I am not ready for cold weather. Please save Saturday, October 28th on your calendar. With lots of help, cleanup of the garden will go very quickly. We will probably start work around 9 am and hope to see everyone there. Please plan to attend the next meeting as we plan for 2024 and the upcoming Christmas Tree Festival. We are very grateful that Nancy has offered her home for a nice and warm evening meeting. Sandy has all the details below.

Please continue to keep track of your hours and submit them if you are able. If you need me to submit your hours, I am willing to take your partial sheet at any time. I will need all hours to be submitted at the end of the Christmas Tree Festival. The deadline for me to submit is usually the first part of December.

I hope to see everyone in the upcoming weeks at the garden and at the meeting.

Joanne – Allen Co Master Gardener Coordinator



Notes from Nic

Well, if you have not heard yet, I am going to become a dad in March! My wife Nicole and I are very excited as are the rest of our families. This is our last month with the garden for the season and I want to continue to ask that everyone please continue to help with upkeep of the garden to the end of the season. Many hands will be needed toward the end of the month to "pack" up the garden. It has been a great experience working with you all thus far in this job and I look forward to continuing to do so. I hope everyone has a great month of October and as we get into full time fall, may favorite time of the year.

Nic Baumer – ANR Educator, Allen County

Tidbits from Teresa

"Earth is here so kind, that just tickle her with a hoe and she laughs with a harvest." Douglas Jerrold

October is here already and harvesting our veggies is well underway. Every year is different, surprisingly my variegated forsythia chose to bloom heavily this September, it is sometimes hard to judge nature's timing.

Apples were scarce last year but the trees are loaded this year. Apples vary when they are ready due to differences in varieties, but there are some clues to help you determine their ripeness.

1. Color: Look for the color typical for your variety, the greens take on a softer green with yellow hues.
2. Taste: If they are somewhat sour and have that carbs taste they are not ready.
3. Seed color: White seeds in almost all varieties mean immature fruit, look for brown seeds.
4. Ease of picking: If you can easily pluck an apple with an upwards motion, it is ready.

Granny Smith apples benefit from the first frost to seal their flavor.

Pick pears when they are still hard, they ripen off the tree, but have turned lighter green or yellowish and the skin has a waxy feel. Also look for brown seeds and ease of picking. Apricots like pears, can ripen after they are picked. For the sweetest apricots look for them to turn apricot in color and the fruit softens a bit. The softer the apricot the sweeter the fruit.

In October, once the nighttime temps have been in the 40's for a few weeks, is the best time to plant spring bulbs. The cooler temperatures trigger a biochemical response, called "vernalization," in the bulb that tells them to stop growing roots and settle in for the winter. Bulbs need plenty of water but good drainage. Growers suggest you mix in bulb food (i.e. 10-10-10 + bone meal) with your bulbs at planting time. Come spring you can add more fertilizer, but wait until they have started flowering, fertilizing too early can cause bulb rot and shorten the plants life. Plant spring bulbs 2-3 X as deep as the bulb is tall, measuring from the shoulder of the bulb to the surface of the soil. Water your bulbs in after planting.

I am always sad to put the Children's Garden to bed in late October. Right now, the garden looks beautiful and this year we were able to tackle many of the tasks needed to get it to that point. I will miss the Tuesday crew and the fun we have had over the season, but I am ready to give weeding a rest! I am looking forward to seeing many of you at the fall banquet and the museum in December. I want to thank Nic for being part of the Tuesday bunch, he handles "outnumbered" very well!

Teresa Diehl

October 2023

October 2023 Meeting

Our October meeting will be a planning session for the Christmas Tree Festival and also for next year. Nancy Miller has graciously offered her home for us to meet. This is especially terrific as she has room to accommodate 50 people! Not to mention the shelter because October weather can be pretty iffy (I remember the cold rain at last year's October meeting)! Thank you , Nancy, for having us!

Meeting Date and Time: Tuesday, October 17th at 6:30 pm

Address: 265 N. Fernwood. North off of Market Street Boulevard. 4th house on left

Note: There are some steps

No need to bring chair!

I also want to extend a very hearty THANK-YOU to Gemma Kennedy, her husband Greg and their two adorable children Allainia and Benjamin for the Luau and hospitality at the September meeting. I think everyone had a wonderful time!

Sandy Bindel

Greetings from Gretchen



TIME IS FLEETING

The daylight is fleeting, and the days are flying by! I feel like I just wrote the September newsletter notes yesterday... (sigh).

We have a few more workdays to care for the garden this month before Work for Food Saturday on October 28. Please join us on Tuesdays if you can or stop by the garden when you can. We are still enjoying visitors and there is still plenty to do!

TROPICAL PLANT FOSTER CARE NEEDED

If you can take home some of the tropical plants from the area near the shed and free library to over winter, please do so this week. The nighttime temps are supposed to dip into the low 40's Saturday so we can help you load

some on Tuesday or stop by and pick up a few this week. Thanks in advance for your help in caring for these plants over the winter season!

COMMITTEE LIST ATTACHED

Just a reminder from the meeting. I have attached the committee list for your reference. The ones highlighted in yellow are the committees you signed up for. The ones highlighted in green are the ones that I assigned to those who didn't respond to the online selection. There are some MGV's who have moved or are of Emeritus status that have not been assigned to committees.

Just a reminder, there are many projects that rely on the help of EVERYONE so just because you are not listed on specific committees doesn't mean we don't need and want your help with as many projects as possible. These committees are to consolidate planning and leadership, they are not exclusive.

~ *Gretchen Staley, President*



Happenings from Kay

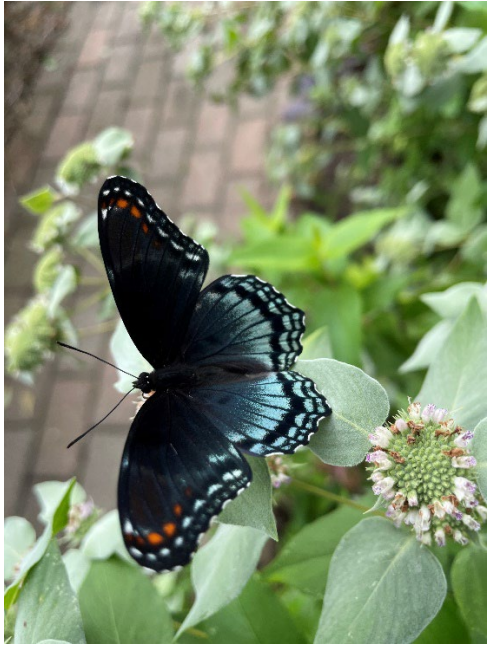
MOUNTAIN MINT - A FAVORITE



Mountain Mint is one of my favorite plants, and everyone should have at least one in their garden. Some people may shy away from mountain mint given the reputation of mints as aggressive spreaders in the garden, however; unlike true mints (*Mentha* species) it is not invasive. Growing up to 3 feet tall and 3 feet wide it has a strong clump-forming habit, is a good naturalizing plant, and is drought tolerant. It is a member of the *Lamiaceae* (mint family) and is native to eastern North America from Maine to Michigan to Illinois and south to Florida and Texas.

Mountain Mint displays pinkish to white flowers from July-September along with dark green leaves that have a strong mint-like scent. Flowers are accompanied by powdery white to silver bracts that give plants the appearance of being dusted by snow. It serves as a tremendous draw for pollinators and is usually surrounded by numerous honeybees, native bees, wasps, and butterflies.

Photos taken of the Mountain Mint at The Children's Garden.



Submitted by Kay Studer

