



# Digging It!



All the Dirt from the Allen County Master Gardeners

SEPTEMBER 2021

---

## *Notes from Joanne*

~ Master Gardener Volunteers ~

Wow, this summer is going by so fast! I hope that you have marked your calendar to help with the Butterfly Release on Sunday, September 12<sup>th</sup>. We will be needing all the help that we can get. Thanks to Victoria we have some Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts that will be coming to help us.

Other dates to remember are Tuesday, September 7<sup>th</sup> and September 21<sup>st</sup>. These are the new Master Gardener training labs that everyone is welcome to attend. Both meetings are held at the garden at 5:30 pm. Please come and support our new Master Gardeners.

We have had another break-in this week. On Tuesday morning I found the back window broken and several items knocked over in the shed. Nothing was missing, and we are not positive that they gained full access to the shed. The window is currently being repaired and you will see the opening is boarded up. Roxanne and Kenny Shoffstall are donating metal grate that will be added to the inside of all three windows. Both break-ins were through a window, so hopefully this will stop all the problems that we are having. We have replaced the security system, but we are reluctant to replace everything that was stolen at this time. Tim and Gretchen Staley are currently hauling their own mower each week to mow. The other items we are trying to get by without until we are sure the shed is safe. The Lima Police department is sending extra security through the area for each shift. Let's hope that we do not have anymore problems this summer.

I hope to see everyone at the upcoming events this month.

**Joanne Rex**



## Tidbits from Teresa

Since I researched orchids for Brown Bag I decided to share some of the interesting data about orchids. They are the most adaptable and widely dispersed plant families on planet earth. They stretch from the North Pole to the South Pole. There are 1100 genera, 25,000+ species and untold hybrids. American Orchid Society is the largest organization devoted to a single plant family.

There are 3 types: 1) epiphytes, living off the air 2) terrestrials, living off the earth 3) lithophytes, attach to rock surfaces and get sustenance from air and rain. Two types are pot grown. Monopodial (1 foot), has one stem, can grow longer or taller but never a second stem. They do not have pseudobulbs to store moisture so they come from climates with year-round moisture. Sympodial orchids grow horizontally across the surface, their flower stalks grow from the top of last year's growths or from the base. They have pseudobulbs (thickened stems) to store moisture through the dry season.

Orchids reproduce by pollination with tactics to ensure they do not self-pollinate. One tactic is a membrane that keeps their own pollen out, or the pollen comes in two different sizes to adhere to different parts of the insect. Some orchids resemble their pollinators, some have petals that are raised and a contrasting color, acting like running lights to guide the pollinator in, and some form pouches and most give off a scent.

The seeds are the smallest of the plant kingdom and have no nutritional sac around them. One million seeds = .04 ounce! They only germinate in the presence of microscopic fungi.

The roots anchor the plant to a growing place and absorb moisture and nutrients. The roots exposed to the air have a green tip covered with velamen, a spongy coating that absorbs water and shields the inner tissues and clings to surfaces.

They can live for hundreds of years in the wild, one variety reaches 100 feet and has such an extensive root system that the supporting tree can collapse under its weight. In tropical rain forests peasants train monkeys or parrots to disengage the plant.

Species that live in direct light have pencil thin leaves to avoid dehydration. Orchids in the undergrowth have broader leaves to harness a maximum of light and thicker leaves to store water. The vanilla orchid is the most widely used commercial orchid in the world. After fertilization the flowers become pods. The pods are fermented and become pure vanilla. That is why true vanilla is so expensive.

The Butterfly Migration Celebration is only 12 days away and we need you all to help with this fun event. Please consider spending some time prior to this to help get the garden in tip top shape.

Teresa Diehl

September 2021



---

## September Notes from Sandy B –

---

### September Meeting of ACMGV

What says fall more than mums, pumpkins and, of course APPLES! So apples it is for our September meeting. Gary Basset of Sugar Creek Orchard has graciously accepted my request to have our meeting at his U-pick apple farm. I've been there—it's awesome!

The meeting is Tuesday, September 21st at 6:30. Bring a chair. The address is: 5395 Sugar Creek Road, Beaverdam. If it gets too dark to pick apples, I'm sure many of us will return during daylight hours. Should be very informational at any rate!

Sandy Bindel

---

### *Greetings from Gretchen*

#### **BUTTERFLY MIGRATION CELEBRATION**



All Hands on Deck! If you weren't able to attend the picnic and sign up to help for the Butterfly Release, please send me an email at: [gsstaley@hotmail.com](mailto:gsstaley@hotmail.com) so I can plan.

We will set up at 1 p.m. on Sunday, September 12 and the event begins at 2 p.m.

We are usually packed up by 4 p.m.

In case I don't get a chance to tell you... THANKS!

#### **SATURDAY WORK DAY – THIS WEEK – Saturday, Sept. 4**

Gretchen will be at the garden from 9 a.m. until noon this

Saturday doing some extra chores in advance of the Butterfly Migration Celebration. If you've had a hard time getting to the garden this summer this will be a chance to catch up a few more Volunteer Hours and get the garden spiffed up for our BIG event!

Hope to see you there!

#### **A CHANCE TO HELP A NEIGHBOR WITH POSSIBLE LONG TERM BENEFITS**

The plans are in the works to restore the Allen County Museum's annual Christmas Tree Festival for 2021! We are happy that they are planning to restore that tradition!

We have been asked to replace the group that made the small baskets of Christmas greens and other decorations for sale at the festival. It would involve a few work sessions to put together items to sell and also would provide opportunities to earn hours from the comfort of home by creating items on your own time.

It would also allow for unique and fun indoor volunteer time to work at the festival, selling the items.

All of the proceeds would benefit the 3 groups hosting the event this year: the Allen County Museum; Johnny Appleseed Park District and Church Women United. It would not be a fund raiser for our group at this time.

That being said, Church Women United is down to 2 members and the Festival Committee is considering other groups that might be a good fit to partner as hosts for the event in 2022 and beyond. The host charities typically each earn

between \$3,000 and \$4,000 for their charities so this has a potential to be a new way to generate money for our organization.

We would like your input as to whether you would actively support 1) taking on the greens booth this year and 2) possibly increasing our involvement in the Christmas Tree Festival by being a host in the future if the opportunity pans out. I know many of you leave town for the winter and the holidays are a busy time for everyone so we would need a core group of people who would like to help make this commitment.

Let me know your thoughts! Thanks!

### **HEADS UP! SAVE THE DATE!**

This year's banquet will be held on **FRIDAY**, November 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the Bath Township Hall! Be sure to note that we needed to change the date to Friday from our traditional Saturday date due to scheduling issues. **MARK YOUR CALENDAR!** We look forward to seeing you there!

*Gretchen Staley, President*



## *Happenings from Kay*

### **GROUNDHOGS**

It was disturbing to find a groundhog had taken up residence in my barn. And even more so, when I discovered he had made his own back door by chewing through the siding to gain access to the pumpkin patch for his meals. After setting traps and hours of sitting (sniper attack), the digger is gone! But here's some interesting facts about groundhogs.

- Groundhogs are the largest member of the squirrel family and can climb trees
- Groundhogs are the only marmots east of the Mississippi River.
- Their fur is a popular fly-tying ingredient for fishing
- A groundhog's teeth never quit growing
- Georgia is the southernmost range
- They can move 3 tons of earth while excavating a burrow
- The nickname "whistle pig" comes from the high pitch whistle they use to alert others of danger
- Groundhogs can lower their body temperature to 38 degrees Fahrenheit and their heart rate to 4 beats a minute during hibernation