



Through the Vine

A Quarterly Newsletter of the OSU Extension Fairfield County Master Gardeners

Winter 2016

Mission: To make a difference in the community in which you live through gardening education and knowledge.

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Berried Treasures in the Winter Garden



Winter need not be confined to a dull palette of brown, gray, and dirty white. With some planning, evergreen foliage, bark, stems, seeds, berries, grasses, and even flowers can bring color and life to the fourth season in the garden. So put on your boots and slog through the snow, ice, and cold to find the berried treasures that await in the winter garden.

Many plants produce fruits or berries to entice birds and animals to feed during summer and autumn, but fewer have berries that persist long into winter. Persistent berries are often bright red; a sharp contrast that adds pizzazz to the muted colors of winter, but also stands out to the eyes of hungry birds – not only the birds that stick around, but also migratory birds returning in early spring. Here are a few of my favorite red-berried trees and shrubs for long-lasting winter color.

Red Chokeberry – *Aronia arbutifolia* ‘Brilliantissima’. This native 6 to 8 foot high suckering shrub has brilliant red fall foliage as well as vibrant red berries; these mealy, sour berries hang on all winter, slowly shriveling and fermenting, until early spring when hungry robins return. The shrub is adaptable to a wide variety of growing conditions,

from sun to light shade, dry to wet soil.

Winterberry – *Ilex verticillata* cultivars. There are numerous cultivated varieties and hybrids of this native deciduous holly; the key in selection is to include at least one male plant suitable for pollinating the female variety you select, since berries form only on the female plants. Height is 6 to 10 feet with a similar spread; adaptable to a range of growing conditions, but fruits best in full sun. The usually bright red berries densely line the branches for a magnificent display that persists often into January; but I do see birds eating these berries in early winter.

Heavenly Bamboo – *Nandina domestica*. This is not native, but it is also not a bamboo, so there is no fear of aggressive spreading tendencies in our climate. This semi-evergreen shrub with tropical-looking foliage also has some of the best-looking berries around, at least from our view, as birds do not eat them. This 6 to 8 foot high shrub grows in sun or shade,



Nandina Domestica

Image from Penn State Extension—Cumberland Co.

Article continued on page 5.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES



CONNIE'S CORNER

Dear Master Gardener Volunteers,

Did you know the first class of Master Gardener Volunteers was trained in Fairfield County in 1996? So by all calculations that means we have had a Master Gardener program in Fairfield County for 20 years...WOW!! Time really does fly when you are having fun!!

So, where do you suppose some of those first class members are?

Well, **Nancy Bolster** who transferred into the program has been a MGV volunteer as well as a very loyal Fairfield County Parks volunteer collecting and leading wildflowers walks all over our County.

Ann Huston, the first caretaker of the Courthouse Gardens for many years is still very active in Garden Club work, organizing speakers, plant sales and even teaching with a pictorial powerpoint view her own gardens.

Esther Messerknecht, the creator of the one and only Master Gardener quilt that hangs in the Extension office still visits and offers to lend a helping hand during our less strenuous projects.

Sherry Oatney still actively volunteers with the group and carries on her love of MGV through efforts with the Green Machine Gardeners Fairfield DD when she is not traveling since her retirement.

Alice Hughes lives in a retirement center in Lancaster. Alice and her late husband, Stuart were instrumental in the beginnings of the Fairfield Herb Association. They also spent time labelling all of the plants at Fairfield County Courthouse.

Janet Neeley was recently featured in the Fairfield Medical Center's *The Monitor* for her work as a hospital TWIG volunteer.

Carolyn Wilson, from Perry County has been actively involved as the volunteer coordinator of the Perry County Master Gardener program over the years and now is actively involved as a bee keeper.

So, let's celebrate our 20 year anniversary on December 8 at our Christmas Luncheon beginning at 11 a.m. at the Ag Center. Come with a plate of your favorite Christmas cookies or light dessert, ready to share your memories or favorite projects. I'll get the tables decorated so you don't have so much to bring. If you are able to join us, please turn your reservations into Kelley Scott (scott.1863@osu.edu) by December 5.

Join in and celebrate our success!!

Sincerely,
Connie Smith
Master Gardener Coordinator
Program Assistant—Ag and Natural Resources
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740-652-7267



Yet One More Reason to Love Being a Master Gardener

by Carol Schleich, Master Gardener 2013

Master Gardeners are involved in the community, make friends, get much needed exercise, contribute to society and learn about gardening, among other things. In my case, as a MGCV at the Opportunity Center, I have finally started eating greens and found yet another purpose in life. Working with DD adults gave me a connection to Special Olympics which enabled my twelve year old grandson and me to help the Equestrian Team this past summer. Our combined experience until then was negligible to the point of being almost non-existent, but we learned about caring for horses and made memories to last a lifetime.

Back to the MGCV program...Today when I stopped at the O.C. garden, I learned about a valuable tool for those who need to remove fence posts, the incomparable t-post lifter. Earlier this year my



daughter and her husband spent time and energy pushing, pulling and digging out old fence posts. There are posts still standing even after all the effort expended by my family, but a big box store is going to get a visit from me.

T-post lifters cost between \$20 and \$50 and according to one manufacturer, removal "is a breeze...rugged steel handle...plenty of leverage...without damaging the post..."

Where was this gadget when we needed it? Learning about the incredible t-post lifter is yet another benefit of the MGCV program.



Recording MGCV Hours

Please work on getting your hours recorded for 2016....by **December 15**. Remember this is the year you will all have plenty of Continuing Education hours due to Dig into Gardening. If it is easier, just record your hours weekly or monthly rather than daily. If you have questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact Connie at smith.3204@osu.edu.

MGCV Training 2017

Master Gardener Training will begin on **March 23, 2017** at OSU Extension in Fairfield County. The plan is to do a joint training with Pickaway County again so we can combine our pool of speakers. A new manual is supposed to be ready early next year, which Connie hopes will be available by March.



Change of Seasons

by Esther Messerknecht (MG 1996)

Seasons of our life and inner soul
Majesty of color leaves changing color orange/red/gold
Earth has change of season cycle of life, death and rebirth
Rest from garden work closure dark increases on earth
Do not fear light will return time change is here
Holidays of Thanksgiving and Christmas activate lights and cheer
(Written November 1, 2016)

Twenty Questions

by Kelley Scott, Master Gardener 2009



One of the benefits of working for the Ohio State University is tuition assistance. This allows eligible staff to take academic courses or even pursue a degree program at minimal cost. I have enjoyed this benefit for the past year, becoming an “official” student again (beyond my ongoing pursuit of learning as a “student” of life) and taking a variety of classes which are interesting to me. This semester, I am finishing a course about plant pathology, a fascinating look at plant diseases and their impact on society. It is a vast and overwhelming topic which experts in the field spend their lives researching and studying. As Master Gardener Volunteers, we can utilize basic knowledge about plant diseases and diagnostics, not only for our own gardens, but to help educate and provide resources to those in the community with whom we are working or to whom we are providing information.

During this course, I learned about a diagnostics approach to help identify and discern what might be causing problems with a plant. It is twenty questions to ask when you come across a plant problem:

1. What is the plant?
2. What is normal for the plant?
3. What are common problems for the plant?
4. What do you see that looks abnormal?
5. What is the overall health of the plant?
6. What exactly do you see?
7. What do you see on other plants?
8. What is the site?
9. Who knows about the plants?
10. When did symptoms first appear?
11. What is the horticultural history?
12. What is the environmental history?
13. What does the client think the problem is?
14. What diagnostic tools are useful?
15. What additional resources are available?
16. How do you take samples?
17. What else?
18. What is your diagnosis?
19. What is the significance of the problem?
20. What are your recommendations?

This approach is further detailed in an OSU Fact Sheet entitled *20 Questions on Plant Diagnosis* which can be found online at www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/floriculture/images/20_Questions_on_Plant_Diagnosis.pdf. A companion video created for Master Gardener Volunteers and introducing plant diagnostics, which features the twenty question approach, is also helpful and can be found at <http://go.osu.edu/BxC>.

As I am a jigsaw puzzle lover and also love a good mystery (she says looking forward to the next season of *Sherlock Holmes* on PBS), I can now be a better garden detective, using clues and information to identify and solve a mystery plant problem. When you think about the millions of plant diseases and pests that are out there, using an approach like twenty questions makes diagnostics a little more straightforward and a little less daunting. I hope this approach finds its way into your “tool box” for your gardening experiences, too.

New Soil Health Program

Healthy Soil Healthy Environment is a new Ohio State University Extension signature program that will create a soil health education and outreach network comprised of Ohio State researchers and OSU Extension faculty and educators. The program’s long-term goal is to help improve Ohio’s soil health and environment by educating farmers, youth and the general public. Visit <http://soilhealth.osu.edu> for more information and resources.



HELP KEEP OUR INFORMATION CURRENT!

If you have updates to your e-mail address or mailing address, please contact Kelley Scott at scott.1863@osu.edu or 740.652.7263.

Berried Treasures (cont'd from page 1)

even dry shade, and develops huge panicles of spectacular bright-red berries that last all winter. Not all cultivated varieties get that large or develop fruit, though.

Highbush Cranberry – *Viburnum trilobum*. The scarlet fruits of this native shrub are edible, but extremely tart. They hang in weighty clusters from the branches of this large 8 to 12 foot shrub and usually persist long into winter, waiting for really hungry birds. This plant prefers well-drained soil in sun; its coarse foliage and large size makes it a good choice for screening or a mixed border.

Hawthorn – *Crataegus viridis* ‘Winter King.’ This selection of native hawthorn is a small tree with a mature height and spread of about 25 feet, and a lovely rounded habit. The gray-green stems set off the display of long-lasting bright red berries, but watch out for the sharp thorns.

Flowering Crabapple – *Malus* species and cultivars. There are hundreds to choose from, with a wide range of heights and growing habits, but look for varieties with disease resistance and persistent fruit. I do see birds devouring the small fruits in winter, but some will last into early spring. A few good selections include ‘Donald Wyman,’ ‘Red Jewel,’ ‘Red Jade,’ Sugar Tyme™, ‘Red Splendor,’ ‘Indian Magic,’ ‘Adams,’ and ‘Firebird.’

These suggestions are but a small sampling of the possibilities for the winter garden. Other persistent fruits to be found in colors ranging from red and orange to blue and white include rosehips, firethorn, grapeholly, cotoneaster, bayberry, hardy orange, persimmon, sumac, snowberry, coralberry, sapphireberry, and all the other great viburnums out there. The winter garden can be a feast for the eyes as well as for the birds.

Article from PennState Extension—Cumberland County, posted online December 21, 2011 at <http://extension.psu.edu/cumberland/news/2011/berried-treasures-in-the-winter-garden>.

GARDEN MUSINGS

Granny's Home Sweet Home

by Melinda Lee Adkins, Master Gardener 2015

My Grandmother Chadwell was a great cook and baker. She loved cooking holiday meals for the family and we loved eating them. I am amazed that she was able to accomplish such a feat all alone. She made homemade noodles, pies, cakes, candy, bread, main dishes and sides. Wow!

Granny Chadwell enjoyed entertaining company and she was sweet and generous to her guests. She made people feel that they could stop by when in the area. She greeted them warmly and always prepared something to fill their stomachs. She left her front door open and screen door unlocked so friends and family could just come on in.

Granny's front porch swing was a place to watch the neighborhood activity and relax in the evenings. Her front porch bannisters were wide enough for her to place plants on top and she lined the entire porch. She had beautiful plants and she would send visitors home with starts.

People and animals enjoyed Granny's porch. A four legged critter would get into Granny's plants from time to time. A little gray squirrel would dig in her plants to hide peanuts and I saw her shoo him out many times. She fed him daily and he was a regular visitor for many years. And of course over the years, there were stray cats and dogs that showed up on Granny's porch. Granny didn't turn anyone away, not even the creatures.



DESTINATION GARDENS

Wildflowers, Wildlife, and Butterflies of the Smokey Mountains

by Melinda Lee Adkins, Master Gardener 2015

Note: The Smokey Mountain National Park facts were taken from park brochure and website.

The Smokey Mountains National Park is home to over 1,400 wildflower species.



The range of elevations in the park provides diverse habitats. The park's diverse habitats coupled with abundant rainfall provide ideal growing conditions

for a variety of plants. Visitors may view wildflowers from the comfort of their vehicle or on one of the designated wildflower walk trails. In order to plan a successful wildflower viewing experience, I suggest purchasing "The Wildflowers of The Great Smokey Mountains National Park" brochure at the park visitor center. The brochure is \$1.50 and contains the blooming calendar, wildflower walk trails, trail map, identifying wildflowers illustration, and wildflower pictures.

Unfortunately, human presence in the park is threatening wildflowers. Air pollution, off trail hiking, and poaching are the biggest problems. Plant poaching is on the rise with ginseng, orchids and trilliums being the top targets. Commercial poachers who remove hundreds of plants, careless hikers who trample delicate wildflowers, and gardeners who take wildflowers home to transplant are all threatening the wildflower species. The following park wildflowers are threatened, endangered or are candidates for federal listing:



spreading aven, Virginia spirea, Mountain bittercress, Glade spurge, Fraser's loosestrife, Gray's lily, Rugel's ragwort, Rock skullcap, and Mountain catchfly.

Park visitors can make an impact on wildflower poaching by reporting observed digging activity to the nearest ranger station.

The Great Smokey Mountain National Park is home



to abundant wildflower species and is also home to 30 species of salamanders, 240 different birds, 76 fish species, 100 species of native trees, and 65

different mammals. Park visitors may have the opportunity to observe the wildlife on one of the 800 miles of hiking trails and enjoy the mountain views with waterfalls, streams and cascades. The wildlife, plant life and beautiful mountains make The Great Smokey Mountain National Park America's most popular park.



Newsletter Deadlines

Do you have an article, garden musing, photo from an MGV project, calendar event or other idea you'd like to submit for the MGV newsletter?

Articles and information are welcome at any time! Items not used in an upcoming newsletter can be saved and used in a future newsletter. Newsletters are published quarterly with the following submission deadlines:

Spring Newsletter—submit by **February 1**

Summer Newsletter—submit by **May 1**

Autumn Newsletter—submit by **August 1**

Winter Newsletter—submit by **November 1**

Email articles and information to Kelley Scott at scott.1863@osu.edu or kelleynotez@yahoo.com. Contact Kelley by email or at 740-475-8498 with questions or ideas! Thanks to all who contribute!

An After Christmas Story...

Have you noticed that trash cans in your neighborhood are “packed to the gills” right after the holidays? It doesn’t have to be that way, and it’s not good for our economy. Consider that every year, around the holidays and otherwise, we discard packaging material valued at about \$11 billion, and we bury enough aluminum in landfills to make 25,000 jetliners.

At holiday time, an estimated 2.6 billion holiday cards are sold each year in the U.S., enough to fill a football field 10 stories high. Electronic holiday greeting cards, offered through a variety of websites, are a convenient, no-cost, waste-free alternative.

It’s estimated that between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day, more than 1 million tons of additional waste are generated each week nationwide. In fact, 38,000 miles of ribbon alone are thrown out each year — enough to tie a bow around Earth. Materials such as this, for example, are treasured by teachers for art projects.

The web is a great treasure for ideas on reducing, reusing and recycling what is normally “holiday waste.” One particularly good site is: A Season for Giving, Not for Discarding at <http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/publiced/holidays/NoWaste.htm>. Here are some tips and suggestions for alternative gift wrapping, no-waste holiday practices and innovative gift-giving.

Other resources are 1800recycling.com and earth911.com. For Buckeyes in central Ohio, check the website of the Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio at swaco.org.

In addition, once the big day has passed and the ornaments are safely packed away for next year, there’s just one thing left to do with your Christmas tree — contact your city or county’s recycling coordinator directly, or ask your local Christmas tree grower about recycling programs near you. Also, the websites listed above offer many suggestions.

RIPE FOR THE PICKING Winter Escapes...



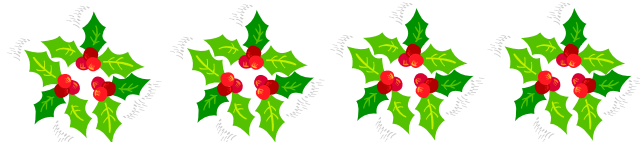
Lab Girl by Hope Jahren

This excellent memoir is written by the woman who is an award winning geobiologist. She is listed as one of the one hundred most influential people of our time. She grew up in Minnesota as a constant visitor to her father's lab. She carries the reader through her long years in education and her adventures in student living and part time jobs. Her work years in pursuit of knowledge took her, along with her iconic lab partner Bill, across the U.S., to the North Pole and finally Hawaii. She was always on a shoestring budget struggling for funding. Trees, flowers, seeds and soil become vibrant characters in her telling. This is well written with humor, imagery and a talent for storytelling. I laughed, thought, imagined and learned along the way.

Review by Barbara Kochick, MG 2013

Books, Movies, and More!

Check out the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society website at <http://phsonline.org/>. It is a wealth of gardening information! If you click on the **learning** tab at the top of the page and scroll down the menu to the PHS Subject Guides, you can find all sorts of book titles, movies/videos, links, and resources at your fingertips. In particular, click on the “Books and More” subject to find movie lists, a kids’ bookshelf, and garden reading group suggestions. Plenty of options to get you through the winter...but still in the garden!



Article written by Neil Drobny, Ohio State University, posted online December, 2014 at <http://cfaes.osu.edu/faculty-staff-resources/cfaes-monthly/archives/tips-for-reducing-reusing-recycling-holiday-trash>.

In and Around the Garden—You Won't Want to Miss It!



Mark your calendars with these important dates and upcoming activities/events!

COMING SOON:

Thursday, December 8—11:00am

Fairfield Master Gardener Holiday Gathering

See Connie's Corner on page 2 for more information.

Winter Hike—Sunday, February 5 - 2:00pm

Charles Alley Memorial Park

2805 Old Logan Road—Lancaster

All hikes are considered moderate pace involving 2+ miles of uneven terrain. Meet in the front parking lot at Alley Park. Contact Alley Park at 740-681-5025 or alleyparkoe@yahoo.com with questions.

Saturday, February 11—10:00am

Adult Program—Garden Dreaming

Charles Alley Memorial Park

2805 Old Logan Road—Lancaster

How can you beat the winter blues? Dream about springtime and beautiful gardens! Join Master Gardener Volunteer Kelley Scott to discuss how to get started, learn garden design basics, and find out what themed gardens are all about! \$5/person for supplies. Contact Alley Park at 740-681-5025 or alleyparkoe@yahoo.com to register or with questions.

Columbus Dispatch Spring Home and Garden Show - February 18 to February 26, 2017

Ohio Expo Center—Columbus

Featuring exhibitors, events, and attractions for home and garden

SAVE THE DATE:

**18th Annual Central Ohio Perennial Flower School
March 2, 2017—Clark County MG event**

Watch for more information at

<http://clark.osu.edu/program-areas/agriculture-and-natural-resources/horticulture/central-ohio-perennial-flower-school> in the new year!

**Master Gardener Volunteer Training
Beginning March 23, 2017**

Hosted by Fairfield & Pickaway Counties

More information coming in the new year!

September 29 and 30, 2017

Ohio State Master Gardener Conference. Franklin and Fairfield Counties hosting in central Ohio. More information coming in the new year!

Contact Kelley Scott at scott.1863@osu.edu or kelleynotez@yahoo.com with garden activities and events to include in the newsletter.



WISHES FOR A HAPPY BIRTHDAY... CELEBRATE AND ENJOY!

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS...

Chris Audette, Ann Brandt, Paul Dilliard, Carolyn Harris, Hank Jones, Barbara Kochick, Linda Landis, Mary Love, Nancy Morrison, Brian Myers, Michele Myers, Louise Smith, Pamela Smith, Julie Tharp, Gina Wagner

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS....

Phyllis Chambers, Laura Cowen, Trish Jones, Linda McCague, Ann Porter, Paul Posey, Melody Schmitt, Gene Svoboda, Jane Thoman, Joyce Wylie

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS....

Georgia Achtermann, Joy Ballinger, Nancy Bower, Ann Brocker, Joan Barrows, Sarah Dalton, Ginger Deuley, Sandra Foster, Beverly Froman, Bruce Garrett, Dorie Kirwin, Barbara Mann, Jackie Marion, Susan Osborne, Libby Stearns, Barbara Velez-Barbosa

GARDEN MUSINGS

I'm Dreaming of a Shangri-La Summer

by Carol Schleich, Master Gardener 2013



When I worked at demoralizing job, in the summer I went out of my way on the way home to slowly drive past a yard with banana trees. Although I often thought about stopping to tell the owner how much I appreciated his (or her) tropical paradise, I never did get around to it. I had researched growing banana plants in Ohio, but the trees offered for sale were a little too expensive. I love to experiment but not with \$45 (plus shipping) plants. Also, the thought of cutting them down to the ground, corralling them with a six foot tall chicken wire fence, then filling the enclosure with leaves was beyond my pay grade.

This year the promise of an ice cream social and tours of Prentiss Schoolhouse, the old grain mill and the train station lured me to the Canal Winchester Labor Day Festival. Even though I had to park blocks and blocks away (and my feet were already sore from a previous trek), the expedition was well worth the effort. But the tour wasn't the best part of the day.

Walking back to my car, there they were. Pots of banana plants for \$7 each! The owner explained



the care which sounds similar to cannas: cut leaves after the first frost, dig up, put them in a paper bag in the garage or basement, then plant in spring. I have neither a garage or basement, but I do have an unheated bedroom which suits my cannas' needs every year.

I missed the rest of the festival because struggling with three large pots was about all I could handle, not to mention I was eager to get my treasures home.



The banana leaves look a lot like cannas, and the two combined will provide me with my own little lush Elysian Fields next summer. (It seems so far away.)



Through the Vine is a publication of the Ohio State University Extension Office in Fairfield County
Kelley Scott, Fairfield Master Gardener Volunteer Editor

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For the latest information and news about OSU Extension in Fairfield County, including the Master Gardeners of Fairfield County, visit <http://fairfield.osu.edu/>



Ohio Master Gardener Program Mission

We are Ohio State University Extension trained volunteers empowered to educate others with timely research-based gardening information.