

Shelby County Master Gardener

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION



Volume 27, Issue 6—July 2022



President's comments—Ohio Weather

By Jim McCracken

We have really seen weather extremes this year as Ohio gardeners. The early spring was wet and cool, limiting planting time available. Next came May with favorable growing conditions. Hopefully, your seedlings were planted in a timely fashion. June rolled around and the weather heated up and became dry. Now we have extremely wet conditions the week of July 4th. Yes, it is a positive that the drought conditions have ended. But your gardening difficulties may have just started. I am listing just a few major problems that will occur in the vegetable garden with the present wet conditions we are experiencing.

Tomatoes:

1. Fungal problems, splash from hard rains came onto lower leaves of plant
2. Blossom end rot, uneven watering and calcium deficiency are the cause
3. Fruit splitting, if tomatoes have set already watch for signs of splitting

Cabbage:

1. Head splitting, if you have not harvested yet, cut heads early
2. Cabbage worms, wet conditions will cause populations to soar

Green Beans:

1. Rust on the bean pods, lowering production
2. Leaf mold, especially if rows are too close together

Onions:

1. Bulbs rotting, if leaves have bent over the bulb is finish growing, pick now
2. Fungal problems, bulbs may turn a light purple lowering value greatly
3. Drying times increased

Potatoes:

1. Spuds rotting in ground, moisture levels are probably not that high yet
2. Potato bugs, as moisture levels increase this pest increases in number

Squash/Zucchini:

1. Early fruit may rot
2. Fungal and powdery mildew problems

Other Concerns:

1. Weeds will grow more quickly, pull before they get away from you.
2. Japanese Beetles are out, their food source (leaves) has improved, and populations will explode as well as aphid numbers soaring.
3. Wind damage, anytime Ohio has heavy rains winds can be a problem, especially to sweet corn.

Yes, the rain has been a blessing after a month of drought conditions. Be aware of what may be happening in your vegetable garden. Inspect your vegetables, research you problems, and attempt to reduce with proper MG techniques. Work with Mother Nature the best you can to insure healthy plants and a larger harvest.

As always, happy gardening! 

July Meeting
Wednesday, July 20, 2022 @ 6p
With good weather meeting
at home of Teresa Freisthler.
In case of bad weather, will meet at the
extension office at 2 p.m.
Directions later in newsletter on page 7.

Volunteer Coordinator's comments

By Doug Benson

Summer is off to a blazing start, and it's not even fair week! I hate to think what may be coming in another week. And speaking of the fair, at this writing I'm still not sure what's happening. The first planning meeting is Thursday, July 14. I will be attending the diagnostic workshop in Marysville, so Jim will be representing us. As soon as decisions are made, we will inform you. I have already let the committee know that if plans are similar to the past, we will commit to Tuesday, July 26, which is Senior Day. Teresa is already working on a craft activity just in case.

As requested, we have done some renovation of the small garden at the fairgrounds. A monument honoring those who have served the fair over the years has been placed in the garden. A group of Sidney High School FFA students realigned the retaining wall and removed some undesirable plants. Earlier this week Cheryl Michael, Dave Slagle and I installed three miniature Knock Out® roses and several annuals to provide some immediate color. Later in the season or early next spring we will plant some additional perennials. The fair board is providing the funding for the plants.



Recruitment of trainees has begun. We've sent announcements to several of the area newspapers. In the last week I've emailed/mailed information packets to about fifteen people who have indicated some interest in the program. If you know of someone who might be interested, let me know. We hope to interview applicants during August and begin the online training in early September. We will have several in-person sessions as well, and you will probably be encouraged to participate. We have set the cost at \$200, with a \$50 refund to those who complete their 50 service hours within a year of completing the training program.

We continue to receive a few hotline calls. I had a "first" today – mulberry weed or hairy crabweed

(*Fatoua villosa*). It is a hard-to-control annual that spreads aggressively. It can produce seeds when less than three inches tall, and the seeds can pop up to four feet and may remain viable for several years. Hand pulling, pre-emergents, heavy mulching, and some post-emergents may be effective. We've had several tree questions, and I'll be taking a sample of a dying burning bush to the diagnostic clinic. Surprisingly, we've not had any calls about Japanese beetles yet. From a personal perspective, be aware of wasps – they got me three times while I was changing out the tank on my grill. I ended up getting a prescription for prednisone.



Our Memorial Garden continues to thrive. Right



now, a great many of the daylilies are in full bloom, and the liatris are just starting their summer show. Visitors can get a good idea of what

plants can handle the hot, dry weather we've been having. Thanks to Carol Strayer who did some serious edging, pruning, and mowing while I was on vacation last month. The edging, in particular, made a vast improvement. We still need some help with deadheading and some weeding. If you have the chance some pleasant day, stop over for even half an hour. We also need to prepare a location for the azalea honoring Bob Bernardi.

A few closing remarks: keep recording your hours in Hands on Connect (HOC). If you need help,

Also, our final presentation here in Sidney will be August 18, when Steve Stone, owner of Nature's Green Nursery in Coldwater, will talk about dividing perennials.

don't hesitate to call or email me. I will continue to send out notices about upcoming continuing education programs, and the webinars will be resuming later in the fall. If you missed Janet Nelson's presentation at the library last month, you can catch her at Celina on July 27.

(Continued to page 3)

(Coordinator's comments continued from page 2)

Please make an effort to attend and make him feel welcome. Finally, our July 20 meeting is tentatively scheduled for 6:00 p.m. at Teresa Freisthler's home. Should the weather not cooperate, I have the meeting room at the Extension office reserved for either afternoon or evening. Until then, keep cool and enjoy your gardening. 🌱

Seed bombs away!

By Doug Benson

Mary Delzeith, Dave Slagle, and I taught over 100 kids the art of bomb-making – seed bombs, that is – at the 2022 Conservation Day Camp on June 30. The theme was Conservation: The Pollinators, so we were asked to create seed bombs to spread flowers that would attract pollinators to our landscapes. Bomb-making materials were air-drying clay, wildflower seeds, and some compost. Waxed paper plates, zip-lock bags, measuring spoons, and markers for identifying ownership completed the supply list. While Mary talked with the kids about what conditions are needed for seeds to become flowers and how seeds are spread naturally, Dave and I used a chef's knife and kitchen scales to cut the clay into 3.6-3.8 ounce lumps and placed them on the paper plates.

When Mary was finished, we distributed the clay and the work began. The kids pressed, pounded, stretched the lump of clay until it formed a "pizza" crust on the plate. They then measured out about two teaspoons full of the seed mixture which included a fine peat-like filler as a topping (the original instructions said to use some compost, but it was too coarse). Next came the really physical step – they had to wad up the pizza and knead it for about five minutes to incorporate the seeds into the clay (After the first group had trouble peeling the dough off the plate, we decided to place the zip-lock over the plate and press out the clay-much easier). The big ball had to be rolled into a log and then divided into smaller pieces that they shaped into marble-sized bombs. Some kids rolled logs up to a foot long and made as many as ten to fifteen bombs, while others opted for as few as five or six fat bombs. Finally, they put the bombs on the plates and set them on the zip-locks in the sun to dry. During the lunch break the student counselors bagged up the bombs so the kids could take them home.

We talked a little about the fact that not all the seeds would germinate, as some were annuals and others were perennials. We also suggested that they didn't have to drop any or all of their bombs right way, but whenever they did, they would have to make sure there would be sufficient bare ground and moisture. All in all, the kids were attentive and seemed to enjoy the activity. We just hope they will have some flowers. 🌱



Starting over!

By Ann Heeley

As some of you know, Craig and I are moving to the north end of Sidney after an extensive remodel of a home with good bones. The landscaping is also in desperate need of a remodel. We face an abundance of weeds, two enormous and oddly-shaped silver maples, several dead or semi-dead shrubs of unknown origin, and poison ivy decorating the back of the lot. Taxus bushes the size of U-Hauls hide the mailbox and several windows, and after the patio was poured, the surrounding soil revealed enough large rocks to build a quaint playhouse for the grandkids.

Needless to say, with the hot and mostly dry weather, we won't be able to make any drastic changes overnight. In fact, if we can grow some grass in the fall and yank out as much of the ugliness as we can, we'll pat ourselves on the back for a job well done for the year.

Which brings me to a more optimistic viewpoint: This is really an opportunity to start from scratch and actually design a landscape before a single thing is planted. Both of us enjoy our current garden and landscaping, even though nothing was planned or planted with an eye for design or maintenance. It was sort of a "let's try this" attitude that changed from year to year, sometimes with good results...sometimes not. Color scheme? Hardly. Eye-pleasing textures, borders, and groupings? Huh? That's not to say we were unsuccessful in the way our garden turned out. We like to think of it as eclectic.

But we now have a chance to use what we've learned and take time to plan ahead before jumping in with a hodge-podge of disconnected green things. It also means that we now know what NOT to plant, even when the sale price or friends' offerings are tempting.

Number 1: On the "never again" list is perennial/hardy geranium (Geranium bohemicum), sometimes called



Cranesbill. The newer hybrids may not behave in the same way, but this old-fashioned perennial climbs over anything in its way. Its seeds have a 100% germination rate, and it sends out runners that, I swear, root within 24 hours. If not cut back to the ground after the first bloom, it continues to swell with brown seeds and leggy stems.

Number 2: Has to be Lily of the Valley (Convallaria majalis). Its sweet fragrance belies its evil intent. Still, I may plant some of these among the poison ivy and let the two duke it out.



Number 3: Stringy Stonecrop Sedum (Sedum sarmentosum) knows no bounds. It can't be contained, killed, or curtailed.



Number 4: Ajuga/Bugleweed (Ajuga reptans) – I planted the 'Chocolate Chip' variety several years ago in



my shade garden, but it never took off. Perhaps it was no match for the shallow-rooted Crimson King maple. However, it managed to leap over the swimming pool and station itself along the

north side of the stream that leads to the pond. At first, I thought the deep purple flowers were an attractive, if not expected, addition to the ground cover along the stream. To my horror, it then spread via stolons to overtake everything in sight. Not being able to use Round-Up, I had to dig out individual plants on a daily basis. In fact, every year since then, I still discover ajuga trying to regain a foothold.

Number 5: Chameleon plant (*Houttuynia cordata*) has earned its reputation for being one of the most



aggressive plants known to mankind. And that's too bad because the leaves of this thug are very pretty. It's supposed to prefer shady, moist areas, but in reality, it will grow in

sun, dry soil, driveways, or lawns if given a chance. The previous owners of the home we're remodeling thought it would work in a front planting on the west side among the taxus, and it did. It also adorned the sidewalk cracks. So much for being classified as a shady moisture lover. After spot-spraying hundreds of plants with Ready-to-Use Round-Up over 5 times, I finally wised up and used undiluted Round-Up concentrate. I think I've won the battle, but I won't plant anything in that area until next year at the earliest.

Next month, I'll share 5 plants we'd love to include in our "new" landscape. Meanwhile, we'll steal ideas from other gardens as we start planning our next gardening adventure. 🌱

Conservation Day Camp—Pollinator Class

By Teresa Freisthler

On Wednesday, June 29, Marily, Becky, and I participated in the Conservation Day Camp at the Fish and Game Reserve. The topic for the week was pollinators. Our project consisted of showing the various parts of the flower, and having the campers identify the parts of the flower as they dissected it. We used daylilies that Becky and Marily brought.

I will never look at another daylily the same! Most flowers have sepals that are green, or a color different than the petals. Daylilies have the same



color sepals. It wasn't until we turned the blossom upside down that we could tell the difference between the sepals and the petals. The sepals are narrower, and thicker. The petals are wider and have more ruffled edges. I always thought there were six petals on a daylily. There are not. There are three petals and three sepals in an alternating pattern. The campers then needed to find the male and female parts of the flowers. They were even able to find the tiny ovules which could produce new plants from the seeds. Merely brought some nutcracker pickers that really helped slice the ovary so the ovules could be seen.

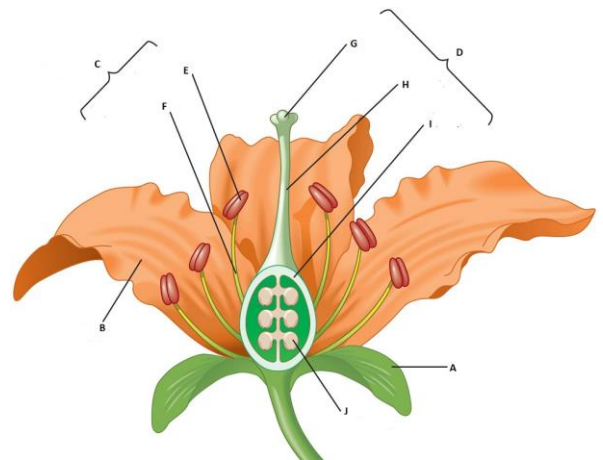
Our next activity was discussing bees and their parts, and how they pollinate flowers and collect nectar and pollen to take back to the hive. They regurgitate the nectar when they get to the hive. Bees carry the pollen in pollen baskets on the hind legs. Most worker bees (that are females) only live about two weeks. A normal beehive can have 50 to 60 thousand bees! All the food for the hive needs to be collected in warm weather when the flowers are in bloom.

We then did an activity where the campers were either bees, trees, or farmers. Using cheese balls for pollen, the bees “flew” from tree to tree pollinating the flowers to become apples. Various situations due to weather, and the placement of trees affected the number of apples produced.

We had a good day. The campers seemed to enjoy the activities, and we think they learned a few things too. 🌱



Test Your Knowledge



See answer key on page 7.

The Ohio State University Extension embraces human diversity and is committed to ensuring that all research and related educational programs are available to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, or veteran status. This statement is in accordance with United States Civil Rights Laws and the USDA. Associate Vice President for Agricultural Administration; Associate Dean, College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences; Director, Ohio State University Extension and Gist Chair in Extension Education and Leadership. TDD No. 800-589-8292 (Ohio only) Newsletter Editor: Carol Strayer, email: carolstrayer@yahoo.com.

The People's Garden July 2022

By Conelia Dixon



We really feel good about The People's Garden this year. We never stop learning about how to do things better or different. There has been more community interest than ever, mostly due to the SDN articles and to attendance at the Farmer's Market. We are expanding the sense of community and are now multi-cultural. Japanese is heard being spoken in the garden.

Another addition to the Learning Center is a ramp for those who find it difficult to step up to the porch. Bob Parziale is working on that. We want EVERYONE to enjoy the garden. Our small leak in the rain tank will be fixed by a plumber.

This year we are striving to raise more substantial food for people like squash, beans, onions and cucumbers, and more tomatoes. Sometimes it depends on the donations of plants and seeds that we get and we just use what we have. We have cut down on the amount of greens that we take into the pantry, like arugula and kale. Those 2 things in particular are not foods that people in the pantry tend to like, although they do like lettuces. They go for okra, green tomatoes, green onions, hot peppers, squash, beans, turnips and sometimes herbs.

Our trip to the Versailles Worch library for the children's program on July 12th was fabulous. Thank you Janet Nelson for going! Vicky Cordonnier had everything organized for us so that we did a Master Gardener presentation to the children first about what is in soil and why plants need the soil to grow. Then we all helped the children plant a couple of seeds (their choice of a variety) in a small half cup of soil to take home.

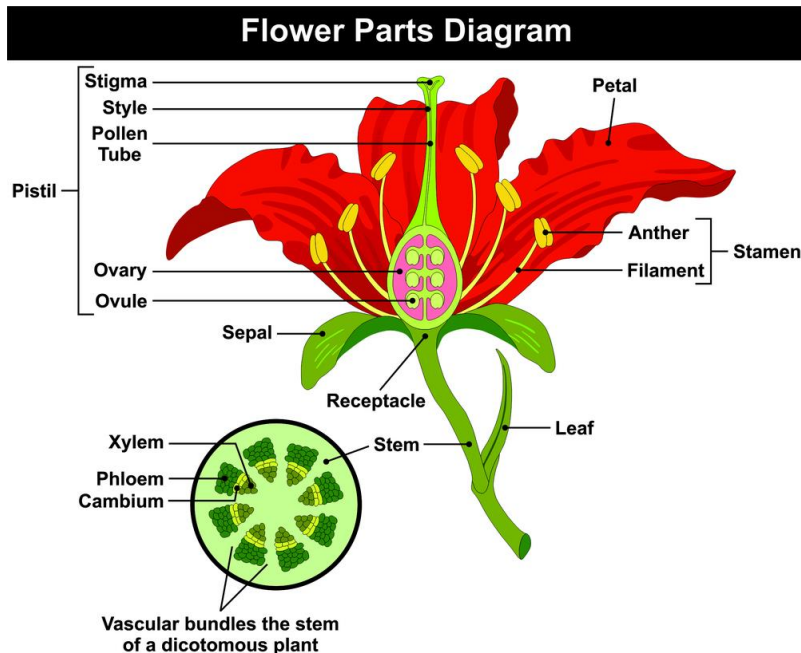
After the children left, Janet and I then helped Vicky outside with the small community garden they have. It was so enjoyable and the children, being in age from 3 to 5 were pretty attentive and participated in the discussion...believe it, they know things!

There are two other encounters with the public this month. As I write this, on July 20 at 10:30 am, there will be a tour through the People's Garden by the Ft. Loramie Senior Center (30 people) and we will share information about how we function. Another smaller group on July 26 at 6:00 pm with a group of 8, the Covington Garden Club. This is a return visit for them. You are all invited to join us anytime we have classes or tours. Gardening is a social activity and mind therapy as a physical workout. Come see! 🌱



- Ohio State Fair: July 27—August 7**
- Auglaize Co. Fair: July 31—August 6**
- Mercer Co. Fair: August 12—August 18**
- Miami Co. Fair: August 12—August 18**
- Darke Co. Fair: August 19—August 27**

Refresher of flower anatomy:



Directions to Teresa Freisthler's home

For July 20th meeting at 6 p.m. and bonfire, weather permitting

I would like to invite the Master Gardener members to our home for the July 20 meeting at six o'clock. We can have our meeting, and then have a bonfire as Jim had originally planned. The address is 10088 Northmore Drive Sidney, Ohio. If the temperature is too hot, or if we have rain, we can meet at the Extension Office at two o'clock as normal.

For those of you coming from the South, go out 25-A toward Anna. (Exit 94 on the Interstate.) The first crossroad after the interstate is Mason Rd. Stay on 25-A heading north until you get to the second cross road which is Sharp Rd. Turn right onto Sharp. Go about half a mile, and cross over the interstate. After crossing the interstate, there is a subdivision in a woods on the left. Turn left onto Northmore Drive. Our house is the second house on the right, and the only two-story house out here.

If you are coming from the North, like Doris, come South on 25-A. After passing through Anna, go about five more miles south. Pearl Cemetery will be on the right. In about two more miles, you will see Sharp Road. Turn left. Go over the interstate, and as soon as you cross the interstate, Northmore Drive is to the left.

Anyone coming from Mercer County, come out by St. Rt. 29 toward Sidney. After passing through McCartyville, in about five miles, you will see where State Rt. 705 starts on right. You turn left on a country road. That is Sharp Road. Follow Sharp Rd several miles over the railroad crossing, and stopping at 25-A. continue west on 25-A over the interstate. After crossing the interstate, it is the first road on the left which is Northmore Drive.

If you are coming from Ft. Loramie, go west until St. Rt. 705 ends at St. Rt. 29. Cross over 29, and you are on Sharp Road. Follow Sharp Road until you cross the interstate, and turn left onto Northmore Drive.

If you are coming from the east, find 25-A, and follow the directions from there. You may also want to go through Pt. Jefferson, and take Sharp Road off Pasco Montra Rd.

Bring a lawn chair. We do have a lot of shade, which cools the temperature quite a bit. I am looking forward to getting together at six! If you have questions, my phone number is 937 658-0362.