

Shelby County Master Gardener

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION



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Program Coordinator's comments

By Doug Benson

Well, it appears that we've made it through two heat waves now. I hate to think what my electric bill is going to look like this month. Another thing that concerns me is the speed with which the lawn is growing and trying to find suitable conditions to mow. My garden is doing so-so. I got three and a half good cuttings of spinach from my first planting, but the second planting doesn't look very promising. It's been so hot that the pepper plants and the tomatoes are having a hard time setting fruit. My small crop of peas is starting to set blooms, as is my one hill of zucchini; and I'm trying to figure out what to do to keep the cucumber vines under control. I hope your gardening efforts are successful as well.

My plan had been to write this article sooner, but I didn't get it done. This morning's workshop about growing and drying cut flowers and flower arranging went well. If my count was correct, we had 40 participants, including a group of four who came from McConnellsville in Morgan County 3 1/2 hours away. Morgan County has a transit system that for a modest fee will take passengers basically anywhere they want to go in the state; and I imagine over in that area they might even go into West Virginia, Kentucky, or perhaps Pennsylvania.



Dried Flower Bookmark

such a diverse audience.

They enjoyed the program and were having lunch at High Grounds before starting the return trip. I also talked with two Master Gardeners from Licking County, just east of Columbus, who had about a two-hour drive. They also enjoyed the workshop and were considering eating lunch at either The Bridge or The Spot before heading home. It was good to have

The program itself went well. All the presentations were good; it's just unfortunate that the acoustics are so bad. Marily did a great job explaining and demonstrating how to prepare and assemble the arrangement, and it looked like all were happy with their creations. If they only knew the behind-the-scenes intrigue in having the roses (especially the yellow ones) available. The initial shipment of yellow roses basically disintegrated when first unpacked and had to be reordered along with the pink ones that didn't even come in on time. We owe a tremendous thank you to Dekker's Flowers for allowing us to keep the roses in their cooler over the weekend. If you need some flowers, consider going there and thanking them for their generosity. Thank you, Conelia (a part-time employee at Dekker's), for making those arrangements. Thanks, as well, to the rest of the committee: Rylee Kay, Marily, Lynda Hadley, and Jill Dickman for making the program go so smoothly. And a special thank you to the young helper, whose identity I am ashamed to admit I don't know. And thank you Shelby County Master Gardeners who attended the event.



Our next event is the Shelby County Fair, which is just a week away. I will be posting a work schedule sign up on Hands on Connect within the next day or so. As mentioned before, our day to supervise the building will be Tuesday, July 22, which is "Senior Day." That way everybody gets in free.

(Continued to page 2)

Next Meeting: July 16 at 2pm & Zoom
If you are able, please come 1 hour early to do
Memorial Garden maintenance.

(Continuation of Program Coordinator comments.)

I will be asking for some help next Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday to get our display organized. As of right now, I plan to be available all day long except from 10:45 to 11:45 on Monday. I'll probably also need some help setting up the display on Friday the 18th; We usually do that around 1:00 in the afternoon, but we'll have to wait and see. I'm expecting to have some medical tests soon, so that could affect my availability.

The Memorial Garden continues to need attention. Thank you to those who signed up for a week of maintenance; your efforts are appreciated. However, the job is really overwhelming for just one or two people at a time; so I'm proposing that weather permitting, as many of you as are able **come for next Wednesday's meeting an hour early and bring some of your gardening tools.** By far, weeds are the biggest challenge. A good group effort should ease the burden on those who have signed up for weekly maintenance.

I urge you to continue to sign up for the hotline and to contribute articles for the newsletter. I understand that some of you have been having some problems recording your hours in Hands on Connect, and I'm looking into the situation to see if it's just something that's happening locally or if it's more widespread. Also, if you're donating produce to any of the food pantries, keep a record and let me know what you're donating, so that we can report that to the state. Traditionally, SCMGV has been among the leaders Statewide; trailing only those in large population areas like Franklin County, Summit County and some of the others around big cities. The "Grow Ohio" program provides good publicity for the Master Gardener Volunteer program; but more importantly, it helps those in need.

Our next meeting is Wednesday July 16th at 2:00 at the Extension office. I will try to make the meeting available via Zoom again. I plan to send out the agenda along with the June meeting minutes and the Zoom invitation Sunday evening or Monday morning. If you have questions about what we're doing or if you have suggestions for the agenda, please get those to me sometime before noon on Sunday. In the meantime, be healthy, be safe, and enjoy your gardening. 🌱

Spongy moth (Gypsy moth)
By Karen Seger



About 8000 orange cardboard traps are being hung to survey for spongy moth formerly known as gypsy moth, a serious threat to forest and

landscape trees. The traps, placed in an approximately 2-kilometer grid, contain a pheromone to attract male moths. The inside is coated with a sticky substance to catch moths. The traps do not contain a pesticide or anything that would pose a risk to people, pets or wildlife.

Surveyors will collect the traps during August. This is a cooperative effort between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Office of the Kentucky State Entomologist.

Some spongy moths are found every year in Kentucky. However, there are no established breeding populations. The survey keeps track of annual moth flight and identifies areas of high activity.

Spongy moth caterpillars can feed on 500 species of trees and shrubs. Oaks are a preferred host while apple, sweet gum, basswood, gray and white birch, poplar. Willow and hawthorn are also favored. Older instars can feed on hemlock, pines and spruce.



DNR photo

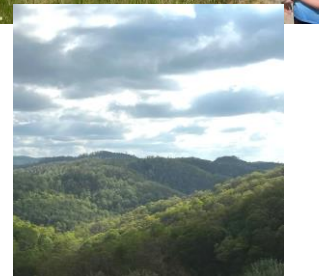
Caterpillars are recognized by the five pairs of blue dots and six pair of red dots on their backs. They are also very hairy.

This year 425 spongy moth traps were placed in Kentucky. Kentucky has had a moth trapping program since 1983. 15 moths were caught in 2024. Along with setting moth traps several Citizen Science visual surveys were reported. 30 visuals of spotted lanterns, 48 tree of heaven. 2 jumping worm, and 8 visuals of imported fire ants.

We rode a Polaris Razor up in the mountains in Harlan County. The moth traps were on Little Shepherd's Trail, a very popular trail.



The second photo is at an overlook later on the trail. Beautiful country. 🌱



Conservation Day Camp 2025

By Teresa Freisthler

This year Cheryl, Mary, Marily, Becky, and I participated in the Conservation Day Camp at the Sidney Fish and Game on Wednesday, June 25. This camp was comprised mostly of about 100 second and third graders. The theme was “Super Powers” and our topic was plants. We discussed parts of plants, what part of a plant is eaten, the life cycle of a plant, and the processes of photosynthesis and transpiration.

After the teaching part was finished, we had several activities for them to complete. One was identifying the parts of the plant on a sheet. The second was making a paper plant putting the parts in the correct order, and using a Tootsie Roll pop as the flower. The third was choosing a daisy, plastic flower holder, and putting water colored with food coloring in it. The object of the experiment was for the daisy to soak up the water through the stem, and change to the color in the plastic holder water demonstrating the process of transpiration. After these three activities were finished, the campers had time to share their gardening experiences. We heard some interesting stories! We felt it was a very successful day.



*Gnome home in Memorial Garden
Photo by Doug Benson*

Teresa Freisthler and her husband John created this gnome home vignette using the old crabapple stump. And by the way, this tree doesn't want to die off as it keeps sending up many shoots from its underground roots around the entire area. Thank you Teresa and John for a wonderful job. 🌱



Other Local County Fairs:

- Auglaize Co. July 27-Aug. 2
- Mercer County August 7-Aug. 13
- Miami County August 8-Aug. 14

Ohio State Fair—July 23-August 3, 2025



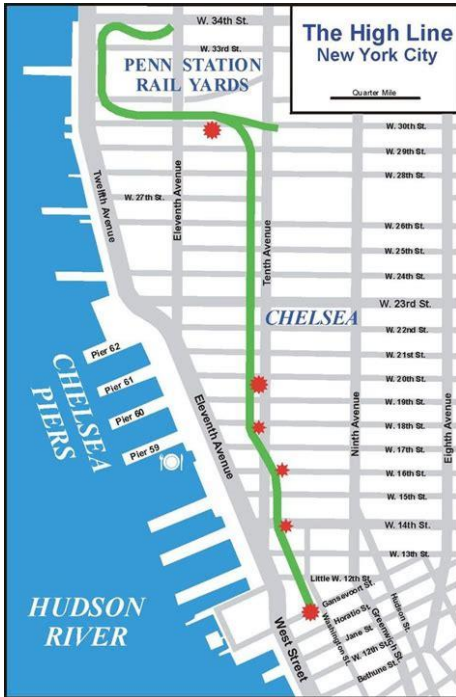
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New York City High Line

By Becky Francis

NEW YORK CITY HIGH LINE



On our recent trip to NYC for our daughter's wedding, we got to visit the High Line. It is a beautiful area, especially this time of year, and although a thunderstorm cut our visit short, we look forward to the next time we visit to go back and check out the areas we missed.

The High Line is open daily from 7am to 10pm and it is free to the public and has four elevators, stairs and ramps located along the line, so you can access it at different locations. They do have tours, but we opted to just start at a location we were familiar with and do our own exploring. Below is some history and information I accessed through their public website about the park. Here is the website if you would like to check it out. <https://www.thehighline.org/>

The High Line is a public park built on a historic freight rail line elevated above the streets on Manhattan's West Side. As a freight rail line, the High Line was in operation from 1934 to 1980. It carried meat to the Meatpacking District, agricultural goods to the

factories and warehouses of the industrial West Side, and mail to the Post Office. Saved from demolition by neighborhood residents and the City of New York, the High Line opened in 2009 as a hybrid public space where visitors experience nature, art, and design. It is 1.45-mile-long running from Gansevoort St. to 34th St. on Manhattan's West Side. The High Line's planting design is inspired by the self-seeded landscape that grew wild for 25 years after the trains stopped running. Wandering through the gardens, you'll find perennials, grasses, shrubs, and trees that were chosen for their hardiness, sustainability, and ever-changing textures and colors in all four seasons.

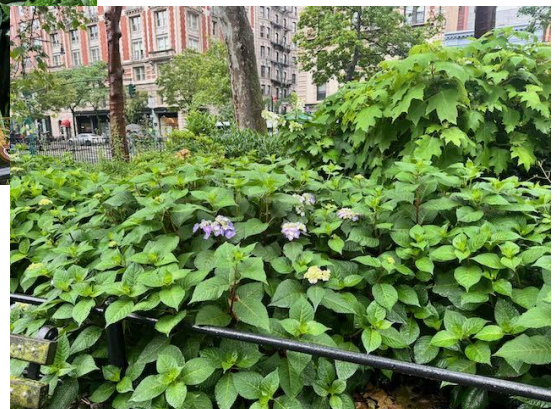
Garden Zones

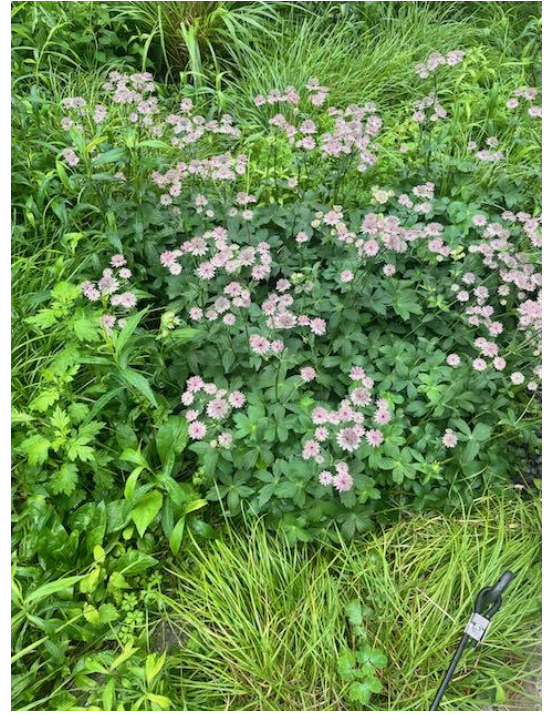
Walk just a few blocks along the High Line and you'll pass through several, incredibly different gardens. You can explore more than a dozen different environs, each adapted to the specific microclimate of sun, shade, water, and wind created by the cityscape around it. Discover how this seasonal, evolving landscape changes from one block to the next.

Design of the Gardens

The High Line's aesthetic reflects natural cycles of life and death, and evokes feelings of being in a wild space. According to Piet Oudolf, who designed our gardens, "My biggest inspiration is nature. I do not want to copy it, but to recreate the emotion." These landscapes don't just happen on their own. While many natural processes take place in the park, the gardens have also been carefully designed and continuously cared for. Shaping the landscape design requires a good eye and an understanding of how the plantings will evolve over time. Changes in the gardens are guided by a team of gardeners who have collaborated with Oudolf for years. We create different moods and compositions throughout the seasons. Hundreds of plant species evoke the patterns of woodlands and grasslands. Birds and insects thread through and animate the plantings. The mood of each garden changes through the year, conveying the ever-changing wonder and mystery of wild places.

On this page and on the next are some pictures we were able to take along our way. 🌿





A Trip to Montana

By Rylee Kay Puthoff, ANR Educator

As many of you know, I spent some time in Montana before the holiday. I thought I should take some time and share with you some of the fun things that I saw/did on this trip. The first free day I had of my trip, I went to a place called Pictograph Caves outside of Billings. It used to be an ancient Native American meeting place, and two of the three caves had drawings in them. Sadly, due to poor archaeological practices, the majority of the cave paintings have worn or eroded. You could still see the faded echoes of paint. The landscape was lovely too. They have lots of what they call sagebrush there. It is wild sage that grows there. It makes the air smell lovely. Montana lacks trees, but when there are trees, it is typically some conifer or juniper. This combination perfumes the air, and I believe no candle could ever do it justice.



My photo from the recreational area. This is the Yellowstone River.



A Picture from beneath the Pictograph Caves.

I then did a little hiking (a hot four miles) and ended up at a recreation park with hiking trails. It was there that I saw amazing views of the Yellowstone River and my first wildlife encounter. I saw a Pacific Gopher Snake that was about 5 feet long. It looks like a venomous snake; however, it is not. It mimics the appearance of a viper so that it will be left alone. As close as I came to stepping on it, the snake was kind and let me pass by without a fuss.

On the last day of the conference, we went on professional tours. Mine was going on a two-hour horseback ride through the mountains. It was beautiful to see, but on the way there, I noticed a lot of these silvery-looking trees that shared an appearance with the sagebrush I mentioned earlier. When we asked our Montana tour guide about it, she said that the tree was a Russian olive. They were brought in decades ago to help reduce erosion in the windy, dry Montana landscape. But now, they have spread all over and are on Montana's list of plants that cannot be sold. I compared it to our Callery-Bradford pears. Overall, the landscape, while sparse, was beautiful and in a different way from Ohio's scenery. It gave me an opportunity to appreciate a landscape so different to ours, and one that was able



A photo from the horseback ride. There were three OSU employees there, so you know what we had to do!

to support both plant and animal life, regardless of how hot and dry it was. 🌿

Rylee Kay Puthoff

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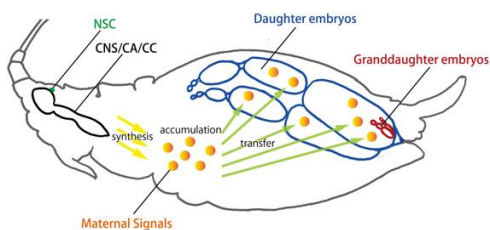


A Mature Russian Olive Tree. Photo Credit from iNaturalist.

Wondering Through the World of Plants

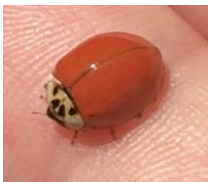
By Ann Heeley

Sometimes when I'm googling a solution to a plant problem, I go off on a tangent. That's when I find myself wandering from website to website as new ideas or plant trivia force me off the grid. Here are some of my recent finds.



Aphids reproduce via parthenogenesis or asexual reproduction during the spring, summer, and fall. They don't need a mate to produce millions of offspring. In fact their reproductive cycle resembles one of those Russian nesting dolls where adult females create clones of themselves within clones of themselves, no eggs involved, just live births. And each one is already pregnant! In the fall, females mate with males and lay eggs that can overwinter and hatch the next year. It's no wonder that just a few aphids on a plant can lead to an infestation in such a short period of time.

Flowers can differentiate between the vibrations of wind and those made by bees' wings. When they detect bee vibrations, flowers respond by producing nectar that is 65% sweeter. This phenomenon is known as photoacoustic. (National Center for Biotechnology, July, 2019 and Tel Aviv University, Jan., 2019)



The Polished Ladybug has no spots. It's a native lady beetle that is otherwise similar to the spotted species, and unlike the Asian Lady Beetle, it's considered a beneficial insect.



The Maiden Ginkgo tree is the oldest living tree on Earth. Leaves have been found in fossils dating back to the Jurassic (dinosaur) era. A monastery in China is home to a 1,400-year old ginkgo, but there are reports of 3,000-year olds in both China and Japan. (Missouri Botanical Garden)



The Jade Vine (*Strongylodon macrobotrys*) is the only plant in the world with true turquoise flowers. (San Francisco Conservatory of Flowers)



The Ghost Plant (*Monotropa uniflora*) is a rare perennial wildflower that grows in mature, shaded forests. It has no chlorophyll, and instead parasitizes fungi to survive. (U.S. Forest Service)



The Ghost Orchid (*Dendrophylax lindenii*) is an epiphyte native to Florida and Cuba. It has no leaves and can only be pollinated by 4 different species of moths with extra-long probosces. (University of South Florida and Plant Atlas.org)

Pinworm moths are major pests in southern U.S. states affecting tomatoes, eggplants and potatoes. Scientists discovered that when they added silicon to the soil, the hairy stems of these plants produced a dark, gooey substance that attracted the caterpillars and killed them when the pests ate the substance. As a bonus, when the caterpillars died, they released gases that attracted native, predatory insects. A two-fer! More studies are needed to determine the ratios of silicon to soil in different environments. (Chemical and Engineering News/Agriculture, April, 2025)

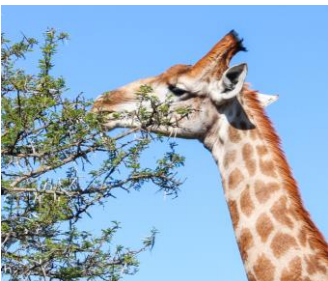
Tomato and tobacco plants emit high frequency, clicking sounds when they're thirsty. Scientists are working to develop a microphone system for greenhouses and outdoor fields that can notify growers to provide water. (*Cell*, March, 2023)

When cats chew on catnip, it increases the amount of insect-repelling chemicals released by the plant. (ScienceNews.org, March, 2021)

Brazil is home to the highest number of plant species, over 34,000. (WorldRainforests.com)

LED lights that have 80% red and 20% blue wavelengths stimulate plant flowering. (Michigan State University, August, 2016)

Plants respond to music by opening stomata (pores) to enhance nutrient absorption and resist diseases. Classical and soft jazz in particular increase immune response and new growth. Loud, harsh music stresses plants. Depending on the specific type of plant, researchers have found a 5% to 150% increase in growth and disease resistance when they "hear" gentle music. Tomato yields increase 13%. Roses are partial to violin music. (National Institutes of Health, January, 2018)



Leaves from the Acacia tree are the preferred food for giraffes. However, when a giraffe starts chewing acacia leaves, the injured tree emits a distress signal using ethylene gas. In response, neighboring acacia trees pick up on this and begin pumping tannins into their leaves. When consumed in large quantities, these tannins can sicken or even kill the giraffes who consume them. Giraffes have learned to outsmart this early warning system though. After stealing leaves from one acacia they usually move 100 meters to only feed on trees that were not reached by the ethylene gas. (Kariega Game Reserve, January, 2025)

OK. Enough wandering through eclectic plant trivia. Time to get back to my initial search: What type of fertilizer should I use on my crape myrtle? 🌿