



Iowa State University Extension, Lee County

November 1, 2004

**New and Timely
Publications from
ISU Extension**

- PM 713f**
Soils for Houseplants
- PM 683**
Composting Yard Waste
- NCR 99**
Care of House Plants
- SUL 5**
Pruning Trees Shrubs
- PM 1319**
Forcing Bulbs

**This newsletter was writ-
ten and prepared by:**

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Lee County Garden Letter

For some time I have been hoping to have a few minutes to write to Lee County Master Gardeners, as well as to persons who have an interest in horticulture. I have to say our mailing list is not complete, and only includes persons and businesses who I believe have a great interest in horticulture and our environment. If you know of someone who would like a copy, please just let us know.

This is a newsletter filled with reflections, and editorials from this past year. It is not intended to be filled with the latest technical information, but with items considered to be this and that, and just for fun. It is also an attempt to communicate with our Master Gardeners. So, with no further delay, let us begin.

Lee County Extension Telephone Numbers

319-835-5116

319-800-211-9328

**Hear Ye, Hear Ye, Master
Gardeners**

Just a note to the Class of 2004, I have Master Gardener Certificates and a pretty impressive lapel pin for all the Master Gardeners who have completed their 40 hours of volunteer work. I would just ask that you mail your log of volunteer hours to our office just as soon as possible. Your name badge will follow very shortly.

I have been asked a number of times about a new class offering this coming winter and I have to say we will not offer a Master Gardener Program until the Winter of 2006. Iowa State allows counties (with a few exceptions) to offer a program every other year. This is due to the staff available to teach the program. If you know of someone who would like to take the training this year we will be happy to provide a list of neighboring counties who will offer the program.

Inside this issue:

Iowa Success Story	2
Great Gifts	2
New Web Site	2
Test Your Skills	3
Mark Your Calendar	4
Forcing Bulbs	4

Master Gardeners truly make a difference in our community. Every fall we have all the 1st graders from Keokuk, 3rd graders from Fort Madison, and 6th graders from Central Lee out to a farm or a conservation park. This year Neil and Mary Ella Johnson of Keokuk donated their farm for a day, as well as Ron and Suzanne Overberg of Donnellson. The 6th graders spent the day at Wilson Lake. The purpose of the daylong event is to share firsthand information on our environment, where our food comes from, as well as to have a little fun. To teach and assist with the event, we depend on a number of volunteers which includes the Lee County Farm Bureau, Commodity Groups, Keokuk Hospital, retired teachers, Master Gardeners, 4-H members as well as FFA members.



Master Gardener Don Edwards shares with students the many plants that are grown right here in Lee County gardens as well as a few of the tricks of the trade necessary to grow that prize jack-o-lantern for Halloween.

DO YOU KNOW YOUR BIRDS?

This bird is one of my favorites and it is Iowa's earliest nesting bird, laying its eggs in January and February. It has excellent hearing and is able to hear a mouse moving under a foot of snow. Like humans its eyelids close from the top down. The ears are actually tufts of feathers (horns) and have nothing to do with hearing. It is absolutely fearless, and it is one of only a few animals which will kill skunks and porcupines. Because of this, it is sometimes called a Flying Tiger.



Great Horned Owl

FACT OR MYTH

The banded woolly bear caterpillar is mentioned in winter prediction folklore that claims the longer the black at the ends of the body, the more severe the coming winter will be. As you would expect, science has debunked this legend by showing the amount of black varies with the age of the caterpillar and the moisture levels in the area where it developed.

It is an IOWA Success Story which dates back to 1882

Apple harvest is nearing completion here in Lee County. In our personal orchard, we are finishing up by making some apple cider for winter. While we grow probably over 10 different varieties, some touted as the latest, the newest and best, I personally always seem to come back to my favorite, that being the Red Delicious, maybe it is my Iowa heritage.

I am certain that back in 1882, Jesse Hiatt of East Peru, Iowa had no idea what an impact a mere seed would have on apple connoisseurs for generations to come. Jesse took a few apples to a fruit show and in 1894 the Stark Brothers Nursery began marketing the Red Delicious Apple. Since then it has been grown across the nation, as well as in foreign countries, with over a million trees propagated and looking just like the tree located on the Hiatt Farm near Winterset.



The Red Delicious' flesh is fine, tender and firm. The taste is mild, but not too sweet and has a great fragrant aroma. I believe that no other apple has the combination of flavor, texture and appearance of the Iowa Red Delicious. To identify look for the five knobs on the blossom end.

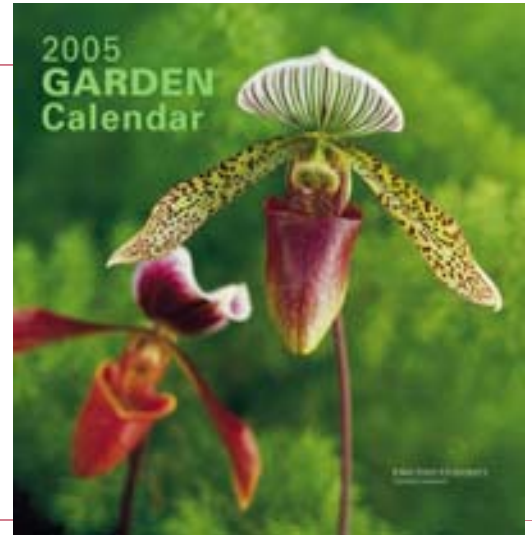
Great Gift Ideas

If you are like myself, I am always looking for great gift ideas which have lasting value and can be purchased at a low cost. If I may suggest the following, I believe they meet these criteria and will far exceed your expectations, as well as those of the person lucky enough to receive your gift.

2005 Garden Calendar cost \$8.00 plus shipping

The following books are outstanding, cost \$5.00 ea, plus shipping

Perennials for Shade: 70 plants 28 pages 130 photos
Perennials for Sun: 100+ plants 36 pages 140 photos
Annuals: 105 plants 44 pages 186 photos
Deciduous Shrubs: 32 pages 75 plants



Lee County Has A New Site—[Visit the New Site Gardening in the Zone](#)

We are very pleased to share our new web site with you. The address:

www.extension.iastate.edu/lee/

While at our site you will want to click on the link to the Iowa State University Extension site and on the front page, near the top, you will see a link which takes you to *Gardening in the Zone*. It is an excellent weekly program which you can listen to and watch right on your computer monitor. This past week, Linda Naeve, ISU Horticultural Specialist, discusses that perfect pumpkin, how to care for it and a lot more. You can also select many other topics to listen to which go back to last spring. It is fun and a great way to start thinking about 2005.





Please match the statement with the picture you believe is correct.

1. This tree is native to Southeastern Iowa and is an excellent landscape plant for under power lines. It is very sensitive to herbicides.
2. Crawfordsville, Iowa is the closest location to Lee County to see some of the latest horticulture research.
3. IPM is a scientific approach to reduced pesticide use. Often it involves monitoring and trapping insects and pathogens.
4. Arian Rufus originates in British Columbia, but was brought to our office by a greenhouse grower.
5. One key consideration often overlooked in home construction is a plan to protect the trees. The landscape can add 25% to the value of the property.
6. Dwarf Alberta Spruce will occasionally revert back to the parent species (white spruce). When these fast growing shoots are first noticed they should be pruned out of the plant.



Mark Your Calendar for November 29th, 7:00 pm

I would like to invite Master Gardeners to a very special program on November 29th beginning at 7:00 p.m. here in Donnellson at the Pilot Grove Savings Bank. Dr. Jerry Dewitt will be here to present a special program “ The Art of Taking A Great Photo”. I had the opportunity to listen to Dr. Dewitt while in Ames, and wish I could have heard his presentation years ago. He talks about the use of both digital and 35 mm cameras. Dr. Dewitt comments on the equipment which works well for him and some which has not. However, most important, meaningful tips on how to get that shot you want, position, time of day, angle and lenses. Dr. Dewitt has had his work printed in a number of books and publications such as: *People Sustaining the Land* (1998), *Renewing the Countryside-Iowa* (2003) and just this month a series of photos in a national magazine *MaryJanes Farm from Idaho*.

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The Lee County Extension Office hosts a fall forestry field day each year on the second Tuesday of October. Master Gardeners can obtain 4 continuing education credits for attending.

Forcing Hyacinths



Choose a 4-inch diameter or larger container that has drainage holes and is twice as deep as the bulbs to be planted. Partially fill container with potting soil.

Arrange the bulbs on the soil surface (1 bulb per 4-inch pot or 3, 5, or more in larger pot).

Fill container with soil mix until the bulb tips show just above the soil surface.

Water and store in the refrigerator for three months. Remove in February and place in a sunny window. For many other types of bulbs ask for publication 1319 titled Forcing Flower Bulbs. It is a lot fun and sure can brighten up some of those winter days.