



## Johnson County Master Gardener

# THYMES

May 2021

### MG Steering Committee Meeting

**Wednesday, May 12, 7 P.M.**, virtual Zoom meeting will continue for the near future. Interested MGs are invited to participate—contact Shannon for instructions!

### Thymes Deadline

Information/articles for the Thymes should be sent to Melissa Serenda at [msserenda@gmail.com](mailto:msserenda@gmail.com) or Doug Geraets at [dougrph@aol.com](mailto:dougrph@aol.com).

Please send news, volunteer opportunities, stories, pictures, gardening book reviews, etc., for the **June** issue by **May 28**.

### Sunday CE: 'When Wild Bees Come to Town: Why We Need Them and What to Do to Help'



JCMGs will wrap up our virtual continuing education programs on Sunday, May 23, from 1:30–2:30 P.M. with Steve Hendrix presenting

*“When Wild Bees Come to Town: Why We Need Them and What to Do to Help.”*

Dr. Steve Hendrix, University of Iowa professor emeritus, will explore the biology and status of wild bees and honeybees on native prairies, farms, and urban areas in this JCMG presentation. An evaluation of pollinator supply and demand in urban areas will be discussed, and suggestions how we might encourage wild bees will be provided. Before retiring in 2015, Dr. Hendrix was a faculty member of Department of Botany and Department of Biology for 40 years. During his

career, he studied the ecology of plant-animal interactions before turning to bees including:

- insect induced changes in flower sex,
- effects of herbivory on plant population dynamics, and then,
- prairie plant reproduction in habitat and fragments

Because many prairie plants succeed as populations only if they have pollinators, he started studying wild bees in Iowa and almond groves of California.



The continuing education program is free and open to the public on the JCMG Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/Johnson-County-Master-Gardeners-of-Iowa-240093463252>). City Channel 4 will live-stream the presentation and record for rebroadcast. Check CC4 for rebroadcast times.

### Iowa Raptor Center Update & Volunteering

BY ANN TVEDTE

This year will be different for the Iowa Raptor Center. We missed last season because of the pandemic but Alice and I were able to meet with the Raptor Center staff and develop a plan that will meet their new guidelines and adapt to the changes in the gardens they propose. The gardens are going to change substantially. The Macbride Nature Recreation Center has new guidelines that allow for only plants native to the center property to be in the area. So, we will be removing all of the plants in the Butterfly and Hummingbird Gardens that we want to relocate. Whatever might be left in those areas

will be more forcefully removed. They are also going to renovate the Hummingbird garden, widening the path and possibly replacing some of the garden dividers; with this in mind there will be heavy equipment and the plants likely wouldn't survive anyway. The Butterfly Garden is being relocated completely to a different location near a viewing blind and education area.

We will observe social distancing and please bring your masks.

***Volunteer to help with the Big Dig: May 8, 9 A.M. – Noon, we will be removing plant material to relocate to other gardens at this time. This is the day before Mother's Day and has been our cleanup day historically.***

***Please bring your favorite digging tools.***

The gardens will be rather quiet this summer as the major changes take place but the staff will be harvesting plants from the surrounding area to re-plant in the gardens. The goal is to establish native gardens friendly to pollinators, local birds, and the visiting public. It should be an exciting project to work through!

## Garden Critters

BY LINDA SCHREIBER



It's spring! Is something trimming your plants besides you? It might just be rabbits. Rabbits are crepuscular, which means they are active at twilight. Even if you haven't seen bunnies in your garden, they often leave evidence that they have visited. Signs that rabbits have been in your gardens are the pea-sized droppings they leave behind. Sometimes plants will look as though they've been trimmed with pruners rather than nibbled—that's because rabbits have both upper and lower incisors. Perhaps you are missing some young, tender plants, or maybe you've found tufts of hair where an animal might have been digging or you've noticed

that something has gnawed on the bark around tree trunks or woody plants.

Rabbits aren't particular—they will eat almost any vegetation and adjust their diets to what's available which makes it hard to rabbit-proof any landscape. Fortunately, there are a few plants that rabbits don't fancy so you might give these plants and shrubs a try if bunnies are nearby.

### Rabbit-Resistant Plants:

- Catmint
- Geranium
- Milkweed
- Snapdragon
- Sunflower
- Sweet Alyssum
- Lantana
- Marigold
- Vinca
- Wax begonia



**Duetiza grows well in zones 5-8 and tolerates a variety of soil conditions and shade.**

### Rabbit-Resistant Woody Plants:

- Butterfly Bush
- Clematis
- Coral Berry
- Duetiza
- Juniper
- Lilac
- Rose of Sharon
- Spirea

## Weeds in My Yard

BY JOEL WELLS

**Velcro Weed-*Galium aparine* or Cleavers**, also known as: Clivers, Catch weed, Grip Grass, Sticky Willy, or Velcro Weed. This is the weed that catches on your clothing as you walk thru the woods and wonder how it got there. This weed is what inspired Velcro.



Velcro Weed, - glove to contrast size of plant.

**Distinguishing Features:** This annual plant creeps along and attaches to anything in its way with tiny hooked hairs that grow out of its leaves and stems. It has a flimsy stem that is too weak to stand up on its own to support itself.



**Control of the plant:** Best way is to pull it out and dispose of it. It will also go away on its own when temperatures reach the 80s or 90s.

1. <http://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74154.html>
2. <http://goodoak.com/info/weeds/index.html>- very good PDF index for all weeds



Stinging Nettles

**Stinging Nettle (*Urtica dioica*):** This is a perennial plant that will sting you on contact with the hairs on the stems and leaves by releasing toxins that can cause severe skin irritation.

I found Stinging Nettle plants in my yard by first touching them and getting stung. I had to look it up to see what it was and was not surprised to find out it was called stinging nettle.

**Distinguishing Features:** Stinging nettles usually grow from two- to four-foot high and have one- to six-inch very sharp pointed leaves. The hairy leaves grow opposite each other. The noted PDF below illustrates the rash that can form from contact with the toxins from the stinging nettle.<sup>(1)</sup>



Leaves have serrated edges



Leaves and stems are hairy



**Control of the plant:** The most effective way of controlling the plant is by spraying the plant when it is small with Roundup or products containing the active ingredients glyphosate, 2,4-D, or imazapyr.

1. [https://phc.amedd.army.mil/PHC Resource Library/StingingNettle FS 18-086-0716.pdf](https://phc.amedd.army.mil/PHC_Resource_Library/StingingNettle_FS_18-086-0716.pdf)
2. <https://www.thespruce.com/description-of-stinging-nettles-plants-2132937>
3. <http://goodoak.com/info/weeds/index.html>-very good PDF index for all weeds

**Poison-Hemlock (*Conium maculatum* L) or Poison Parsley:** I looked at this plant and recognized it from the weed identification training when learning to become a Master Gardener. This plant can be confused with wild carrot or wild parsley or Queen Anne's Lace. It is very poisonous and was used as the poison that killed Socrates in ancient Greece. In Washington State, one person died in 1999 and another in 2010 after eating poison-hemlock.<sup>(1) (5)</sup>

**Do Not Touch It with Bare Hands as All Parts of this Plant are Poisonous.**



Glove used to show size perspective

**Distinguishing Features:** Poison-Hemlock stems; have reddish or purple spots and streaks, are not hairy, and are hollow. Leaves are bright green, fern-like, finely divided, toothed on edges and have a strong musty or parsnip-like odor when crushed. Flowers are tiny, white and arranged in small, umbrella-shaped clusters on ends of branched stems.<sup>(2)</sup>



Poison Hemlock: reddish spots & streaks on smooth stems



Queen Anne's Lace: completely green and hairy stems

**Control of the plant:** Poison Hemlock can be dug out and removed but care must be taken to remove the crown root. Repeated mowing will also remove it. The most effective way of controlling the plant if there is a large amount is by spraying the plant when it is small with a herbicide like Roundup or products containing the active ingredients glyphosate, 2,4-D, or dicamba applied in early spring or late summer/fall.

1. <https://www.foodsafetynews.com/2015/05/10-people-treated-for-eating-poison-hemlock-in-washington/>
2. <https://kingcounty.gov/services/environment/animals-and-plants/noxious-weeds/weed-identification/poison-hemlock.aspx>
3. <https://www.invasive.org/weedcd/pdfs/wow/poison-hemlock.pdf>
4. <http://prepare-and-protect.net/2016/01/wild-carrots-or-poison-hemlock/>
5. <https://www.prweb.com/releases/2010/07/prweb4298154.htm>
6. <http://goodoak.com/info/weeds/index.html>-very good PDF index for all weeds

|  <b>MG Birthdays</b>  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| May 2021   |                   |
| <b>2</b> .....   | Lori Penn-Goetsch |
| <b>8</b> .....   | Joyce Miller      |
| <b>9</b> .....   | Sharon Jeter      |
| <b>11</b> .....  | Sandy Gannon      |
| <b>15</b> .....  | Marilyn Kempnich  |
| <b>16</b> .....  | Breyan Neyland    |
| <b>22</b> .....  | Weijing Wu        |
| <b>25</b> .....  | Mary Lou Mayfield |
| <b>29</b> .....  | Bonnie Penno      |
| <b>31</b> .....  | Kathy Donnelly    |

**MG Upcoming Events/Volunteer Opportunities**

**\*\*\*Check organization website for cancellations prior to event date.\*\*\***

**May 2021**

**Backyard Abundance**

<http://backyardabundance.org/events>

**Saturdays, May 1 and May 8, 10 to 11:30 A.M.**

Urban Bushcrafting for Families. During this class, you will take home all the knowledge, publications and inspiring ideas needed to successfully and enjoyably grow fruit or vegetables and herbs in your landscape. High-yielding, low-maintenance and resilient varieties will be shared along with companion plants that will help plants thrive. Only organic methods will be featured; no synthetic pesticides or fertilizers will be discussed.

- May 1: Grow Easy Fruits at Wetherby Park, 2400 Taylor Drive, Iowa City
- May 8: Grow Easy Vegetables and Herbs at Robert A. Lee Community Center, 220 South Gilbert Street, Iowa City

Participants of any experience level are invited. Fee: \$5 event per family (up to 4 people). Backyard Abundance members can register for free. Register at <https://www.eventzilla.net/user/backyardabundance>.

### **Bur Oak Land Trust**

<https://www.facebook.com/BurOakLandTrust/events>

**Saturday, May 8, 10 to 11 A.M. or 11:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M**

Outdoor Yoga at Belgum Grove. Belgum Grove, 3261 500th St SW, Iowa City. Bur Oak Land Trust is hosting two free outdoor yoga sessions Saturday, May 8 at Belgum Grove Preserve. Enjoy a serene landscape and the sounds of nature as instructor Maddy Maloney guides you through a light and fun session.

- Session 1: 10 to 11 A.M.
- Session 2: 11:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M.

A yoga mat is optional, but please make sure to bring water! To keep the space peaceful for everyone, we're allowing 15 registrations per session for social distancing purposes and requiring masks at the start. The class is free but space is limited for this event, so please honor your registration if you're able or let us know if you can't make it. Register at

<https://buroaklandtrust.salsalabs.org/yogaatbelgumgrove/index.html>.

### **Eastern Iowa Bird Watchers/IC Birds**

<http://www.iowacitybirdclub.org/events>

**Saturday, May 8**

Spring Bird Count 2021. Johnson County Spring Migration Count. We will bird individually or in small groups to count as many birds as possible across Johnson County. Last year 156 species were recorded. To participate, contact Chris Caster prior to count day at [cjcaster@q.com](mailto:cjcaster@q.com). Visit <https://iowacitybirdclub.org/spring-count/> for more information.

**Thursday, May 20, 6:45 to 8:45 P.M**

Bird Club Meeting. Zoom. Anna Buckardt Thomas, Iowa DNR Avian Ecologist, will present "Trumpeter Swans in Iowa: The Restoration and Research of an Iconic Species." Learn about the history of Iowa's Trumpeter Swans, from local extinction to a thriving population.

## **Linn County-ISU Extension**

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/linn/>

**Saturday, May 8, 8 a.m. to Noon**

**Linn County MGs Annual Spring Plant Sale; American Legion Post 298, 625 31st St, Marion, IA 52302.** Shop for high-quality, affordable plants at our in-person plant sale. Just in time for Mother's Day! Our plants are being grown in the Lowe Park Greenhouse by Master Gardeners, and in Master Gardeners' own personal gardens. There will be a variety of lawn, garden and house plants for sale, including succulents, hosta, tomato and peppers, and day lilies. Typically, we offer ~3,000 plants for purchase each year. In response to the pandemic, shoppers, volunteers, and staff will all be required to wear masks and practice social distancing. Many of the plants will be located outdoors. Shade plants and checkout will be indoors at American Legion Hall. Check or credit card orders can be processed; no cash will be accepted.

**Tuesdays, May 4 and 18, and Thursday, May 20.**

Preserve the Taste of Summer. Online. Preserving your own foods can be a lot quicker and easier than you might think. It's a great way to have delicious, local food all year long. An introductory course and four hands-on workshops offer you the opportunity to learn safe food preservation techniques.

- Tuesday May 4 at 6:30 P.M.: Salsa Making Basics
- Tuesday May 18 at 10 A.M. or 6:30 P.M.: Preserve the Taste of Summer 101
- Thursday May 20 at 6:30 P.M.: Jam Making Basics.

Learn more and register at <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/preserve-taste-summer>.

## **Additional Resources/Event Opportunities**

### **100 Grannies**

<http://www.100grannies.org>

### **Iowa State Extension**

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/calendar/>

### **Johnson County Conservation**

<http://www.johnson-county.com/conservation>

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/johnsoncountyconservation/events/>

### **Johnson County-ISU Extension**

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/johnson/>

### **New Pioneer Coop**

<https://www.newpi.coop/community>

### **ProjectGREEN**

<http://www.projectgreen.org/> and <https://www.facebook.com/www.projectgreen.org>

Nothing at press time



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***Mail can be sent to:***

*Johnson County Extension Service  
Attn: Master Gardener Newsletter  
3109 Old Highway 218 S.  
Iowa City, IA 52246*

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**Send email to: [bielicke@iastate.edu](mailto:bielicke@iastate.edu)**