



Johnson County Master Gardener

THYMES

May 2022

MG Steering Committee Meeting

Wednesday, May 11, 6:30 P.M., we will have a hybrid meeting—both in-person and by Zoom. 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 or Doug Geraets at: dougrph@aol.com.

Please send news, volunteer opportunities, stories, pictures, gardening book reviews, etc., for the **June** issue by **Friday, May 27**.

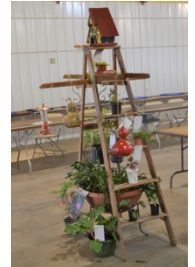
ITS PLANT SALE WEEK!!

BY EMIL RINDERSBACHER



It's Plant Sale week! After a two-year hiatus, the 13th annual Master Gardener Plant Sale & Flea Market will take place Saturday, May 7, from 9 A.M. to noon, in Buildings B and C at the Johnson County Fairgrounds.

Planning started in January and Master Gardeners have been hard at work in April digging, potting, and getting ready for our major fundraiser. It's been wonderful getting to know our new and active MG volunteers and learning about their gardens and donations. We're also grateful for financial support from Johnson County Extension and our sponsor, Hills Bank.



Help us spread the word about the sale by telling your friends, family members, neighbors, colleagues and share the event on Facebook. If you aren't working the sale, stop by and do some plant shopping!

If you have Houseplants or Flea Market items to donate, drop them off at Building B on Thursday, May 5, from 9 A.M. to 7:30 P.M. or Friday, May 6, from 9 A.M. to 4 P.M. Flea Market items must be clean and in working order. No chemicals, please.

It's Thyme to ...



BY MELISSA SERENDA AND LINDA SCHREIBER

The April showers have come and gone. That means it's time for May flowers!

Our native flowers will make their appearance with little assistance from us. Some of our earlier-flowering native plants that bloom in May include Prairie Smoke (*Geum triflorum*), Shooting Star (*Dodecatheon meadia*), and pollinator favorite Golden Alexander (*Zizia aurea*).

Those early bulb flowers like tulips and daffodils have come and gone, **but resist the urge to tidy up their remaining foliage** until after it has

turned yellow and died back. The plant is still photosynthesizing and storing up food in its bulb while the foliage is green, so make sure to give it time to stock up its resources for next spring.

Speaking of not tidying up...if you've been "leaving your leaves" for bees and other pollinators to overwinter, **May is when you can think about tidying up those stems and leaves** that were left to protect our insect friends. This month, when overnight temps consistently stay above 50 degrees F, those overwintering pollinators will emerge and begin their life cycle again—thanks to thoughtful gardeners who share their yards with these **important** insects.

Once we have passed the last freeze—usually around May 4 in Iowa City—it is **safe to plant veggies like tomatoes and peppers outside**. Thin any seedlings that were sown directly to prevent overcrowding. Staggering the planting of crops like beans and corn every two or three weeks can give you a longer period to harvest and enjoy that fresh produce.

If your houseplants take a summer vacation outside, now is the time to **begin settling them into a shady, protected area after a winter indoors**. Be careful not to scald them with a sudden move into bright sun, or expose them to strong winds: be aware of their light and moisture requirements and site them accordingly once they have had time to acclimate.

After enjoying the spring blooms of lilac and forsythia, take time to **prune out 1/3 of the older branches every couple of years** to keep the plant vigorous and healthy. **Apple trees should also be thinned** within 6 weeks of blooming.

As we move into the hot, dry days of summer, give your lawn a little room to grow **by raising the height of your mower to at least 3-inches**. This will not only help prevent the heat from stressing the grass, but the extra height can help shade out weeds trying to gain a foothold in your lawn.

Sources:

- <https://store.extension.iastate.edu/product/Garden-Tips-Guidelines-to-Seasonal-Chores-Reiman-Gardens>

- <https://store.extension.iastate.edu/Product/Introduction-to-Iowa-Native-Prairie-Plants-Sustainable-Urban-Landscapes-PDF>
- <https://extension.illinois.edu/blogs/flowers-fruits-and-frass/2022-04-01-prune-properly-your-forsythia-and-lilac-shrubs-will-thank>
- https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/mow_high_for_weed_and_grub_control
- <https://www.usclimatedata.com/climate/iowa-city/iowa/united-states/usia0414>
- <https://extension.illinois.edu/blogs/garden-scoop/2021-02-26-spring-garden-cleanup>

Johnson County Master Gardeners 2022 Seed Share Report

BY LINDA SCHREIBER



Our Master Gardening group pivoted the emphasis of our Seed Share no-cost introduction to gardening to help launch a new Seed Library in the Swisher Community Library with seed donations from four proprietary seed companies.

Four seed companies shared their seed packets:

- Baker Heirloom Seeds
- Harris Seeds
- Seed Savers of Decorah Iowa
- Territorial Seeds

Master Gardeners Alice Linhart, Linda Schreiber and Jackie Wellborn (pictured right) explained the new Seed Library operation to participants and shared their flower



seed collections along with information about starting seeds and answering gardening questions.



Invitations to proprietary seed companies to participate in our sixth annual Seed Share program were sent in December 2021. As the calendar turned to the New Year, responses trickled in. Instead of numerous favorable responses, as Johnson County Master Gardeners received in past years, seed companies unveiled their new approach shifting their donation focus to community gardens. As a result, our donations dropped 92% - from 1,600 seed packets to 135. During two years of the coronavirus pandemic, the need for fresh food was vast. Therefore, we could not be disappointed – our partners were emphasizing those who need help the most. And we were thrilled the Swisher Community Library embraced a new concept for community members and library patrons.

In previous years, following seed distributions the remaining seed packets were shared with Johnson County area community food pantries. They were notified of the shift this year and understood the situation. We hope to bring back the traditional Seed Share in 2023.

Patience in the garden is important. We'll wait to see what happens.

The Plants We Eat: Leaves

BY MARY LOU MAYFIELD



Remember when we were reminded to “eat our leafy green vegetables?” Visions of canned spinach or iceberg lettuce salad! High in fiber and nutrients, fresh greens from our gardens are delicious as well as nutritious!

Leaves are the part of a plant that are the main organs of photosynthesis and transpiration. They are the factories that convert carbon dioxide, water, nutrients, and sunlight into food for the plant. We think of thin, flattened structures, but leaves can also be cactus pads or the scales of an onion bulb (the base is the stem).

Besides salads, greens can be prepared in many ways. I remember the year when I made Rode Kool (pickled red cabbage) for the Taste of Plum Grove event. It was so delicious, I now make smaller batches for my husband and me.

Rode Kool

<https://www.eatgathergo.org/recipe/dutch-red-cabbage-with-apples/>



Other members of the cabbage family can be prepared in ways that make them more delicious:

Kale Chips are a delicious snack food! I also crumble them and use them to boost the nutrition of casseroles and soups. I use celery salt for seasoning, and toss it in a plastic bag. Massaging kale not only distributes the oil and salt, it's also good for tenderizing kale for salads.

https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/easy_tasty_kale_chips

Roasted Brussels Sprouts provides a flavor and texture change from boiling them. They can also be glazed with a little balsamic and honey <https://foodsmartcolorado.colostate.edu/2020/04/14/crispy-brussels-sprouts-with-balsamic-and-honey/>



Many **herbs** are used for their leaves. In addition to adding flavor, some are very nutritious. https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/increase_intake_of_fresh_herbs_for_everyday_health

Please contact me if you have a favorite leaf recipe not on this list. Or if you try one of these and like it, or have tweaked it to make it taste better.

Storage Building for Handyman



Bob Oppliger who maintains a school garden at Grant Wood Elementary has a garden shed (pictures below) available to any JCMG who wants it.



It has some storm damage so this would require some handyman skills. Contact him at 319-594-6835 if interested. You would have to pick up and move the building!

 MG Birthdays 	
May 2022	
2	Lori Penn-Goetsch
8	Joyce Miller
9	Sharon Jeter
10	Bryan Wilson
11	Sandy Gannon
15	Marilyn Kempnich
16	Breyan Neyland
25	Mary Lou Mayfield
29	Bonnie Penno
30	Elizabeth Loeb

MG Upcoming Events/Volunteer Opportunities

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

May 2022

Backyard Abundance

<http://backyardabundance.org/events>

Wednesday, May 4, 6 to 7:30 P.M.

GROW MEMORIES TOGETHER. Edible Classroom, 400-450 E Burlington St, Iowa City. During this class, we will introduce ideas that bring your friends and family into the garden for fun, connection and bonding. Through hands-on, gardening activities, we will cover best practices for creating a new bed, planting seedlings, direct seeding, weeding and watering ... all in collaboration with others. You may even meet a few new garden buddies. Sliding scale fee: \$25 - \$0, based upon your access to resources. Register at www.backyardabundance.org/event-details/growmemories.

Wednesday, May 29, 2 to 3:30 P.M.

SPRING WILD MEDICINE. Big Grove Preserve, 3999 Starry Night Ln NE, Solon. Ramble along a trail and learn about wildcrafting, harvesting medicine and insight from plants growing in your bioregion. Fun activities will help us explore local places, listen for and identify plants, and rediscover what many modern minds have forgotten. Learn creative ways to acknowledge the land and our plant relatives. We will be mindful of precautions related to potentially hazardous plants. Sliding scale fee: \$25 - \$0, based upon your access to resources. Register at www.backyardabundance.org/event-details/spring-medicine.

Wednesday, May 18, 6 to 7:30 P.M.

MEET NEW EDIBLE FRIENDS. Hickory Hill Park, 1439 E Bloomington St, Iowa City,. How can you differentiate tasty edibles from plants that might make you sick? Through playful activities, you will learn patterns that help quickly sift through all that vegetation and reveal the wild edibles in your area. Sliding scale fee: \$25 - \$0, based upon your access to resources. Register at www.backyardabundance.org/event-details/meet-edible-friends.

Thursday, May 19, 6 to 8 P.M.

NATURE AND FOREST THERAPY FOR ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION. Palisades-Kepler State Park. Join Backyard Abundance and Good Medicine for an immersive experience with the land and the (just passed) full moon. Bring your whole self on this gentle, reflective walk with the land and let's see what we encounter. We will be provided with an opportunity to slow down and be present with self and with the world around us. We will bath in the medicine of the land, known as Shinrin-Yoku, a practice that first started in Japan. Sliding scale fee: \$30 - \$0, based upon your access to resources. Register at www.backyardabundance.org/event-details/nature-therapy-anxiety.

Wednesday, May 25, 5:30 to 6:30 P.M.

YOGA OUTSIDE: MAY. Harvest Preserve, 1645 N Scott Blvd, Iowa City. Tap into your wild peace and deep presence. All-level yoga to help you come back to the body, calm the mind, and expand your comfort zone. We will ask the tall, old stones and trees to support a sense of place while we breathe with the green. Sliding scale fee: \$20 - \$0, based upon your access to resources. Register at www.backyardabundance.org/event-details/yoga-may.

Thursday, May 26, 6 to 7 P.M.

THIS ABILITY - HOLISTIC DANCE: MAY. College Green Park, 600 E College St, Iowa City. This holistic dance class will embody the 5 elements and their geometric shapes, while incorporating it with movement for mental and physical healing. Sliding scale fee: \$20 - \$0, based upon your access to resources. Register at www.backyardabundance.org/event-details/this-ability-may.

Eastern Iowa Bird Watchers/IC Birds

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

Weekdays, May 2 - May 27, 6:30 to 8 A.M.

HICKORY HILL PARK WARBLER WALKS. Hickory Hill Park, 1439 E Bloomington St, Iowa City. After a two-year hiatus, Warbler Walks are back! Start your weekdays watching warblers with rotating leaders Mark Madsen, Chris Edwards, Jason Paulios, Dan Rose, Elliot Stalter, and Mark Brown. Meet at the parking lot at the end of Conklin Lane, off N. Dodge St.

Saturday, May 7

SPRING BIRD COUNT 2022. Johnson County Spring Migration Count. This year we're back to normal protocols after two years of pandemic modifications – we'll bird in small groups to count as many birds as possible in Johnson County. Species and individual birds are tallied – last year 166 species were recorded. Solo birding is also an option. To participate, email coordinator Chris Caster in advance of count day at cjcaster@q.com. You will be assigned to a group with a leader who will send details for a meeting time and location. For those doing solo birding, an area will be assigned. For more information visit <https://iowacitybirdclub.org/spring-count/>.

Saturday, May 14, 7:30 A.M. to 12 P.M.

FIELD TRIP: CEDAR RIVER CROSSING. 5473 Sutliff Rd NE, Solon. Target species include migrating warblers, sparrows, shorebirds, and waterfowl. Join leaders Mark and Deb Rolfes for a hike through this Johnson County Conservation property that includes wetlands, prairie, and forest. We'll hike farther than on our fall trip in order to cover more of the habitats. Trails are mowed and/or rough paths that can be wet or muddy. Bring a spotting scope if you have one. Don't forget bug spray! Meet in the parking lot at 7:30 A.M. and we'll finish at noon. For a map and information visit <https://www.johnsoncountyiowa.gov/conservation/public-use-areas>.

Wednesday, May 18, 6:45 to 8:45 P.M.

BIRD CLUB MEETING. Zoom. Linda Rudolph will present "Birding, Tigers, and the Taj Mahal: Visiting Magical Northeast India." Visit <https://iowacitybirdclub.org/event/bird-club-meeting-23/> for details.

Johnson County Conservation

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/johnsoncountyconservation/events/>
<https://www.mycountyparks.com/County/Johnson/Events.aspx5/12>

Thursday, May 12, 4 to 6 P.M.

SPRING EPHEMERAL HIKE. Cangleska Wakan, 4045 245th St NE, Solon. Join a naturalist to hike through a forest filled with wildflowers. Along the way, hikers will learn about the species in bloom. Hikers can choose between a one-mile loop or a three-mile hike through Cangleska Wakan and Big Grove Preserve. The terrain is uneven and in places steep, rocky, or muddy. Registration closes 24 hours in advance. Register at <https://www.mycountyparks.com/County/Johnson/Events.aspx>.

Friday, May 13, 6 to 8 P.M.

INTRODUCTION TO FLY TYING. Ely Public Library, 1595 Dows St., Ely. Have you always been interested in fly fishing but you are not sure where to start? This is the program for you. This event is hosted by the Ely Public Library and is provided through a partnership between the Iowa DNR, Johnson County Conservation, and Corridor Outdoor Adventures. The outdoor skills series has been providing programming for over a year in both Johnson and Linn counties. These courses are intended to be for those without a familial connection to hunting, angling, and other outdoor skills. Register at <https://www.mycountyparks.com/County/Johnson/Events.aspx>.

Project GREEN

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

OPEN GARDENS WEEKEND: WANTED: YOUR GARDEN. Gardeners all over Iowa City and Coralville are opening their gardens, big & small, to inspire new gardeners and to help raise money for Project GREEN's mission of making Johnson County more beautiful. If you'd like to open your garden, please fill out the questionnaire by June 15, 2022, in order to be included in the Open Gardens Map. Learn more at <https://projectgreen.org/gardens-wanted/>.

Seed Savers

<https://www.seedsavers.org/events>

Saturday and Sunday, May 6-7 and May 14-5,

Time slots are available starting from 8 A.M. to 4 P.M. on each day of the plant sale.

HEIRLOOM PLANT SALE. River Root Farm, 2862 Locust Rd, Decorah. This year's plant sale is being held at a different location but will feature the same open-pollinated and heirloom plants offered by Seed Savers Exchange in years past, with a few exceptions. Learn more and see FAQs at <https://lgvc.seedsavers.org/>.

Trees Forever

<https://treesforever.org/Events>

Wednesday, May 4, 12 to 1:30 P.M.

ROADSIDE PLANS FOR COMMUNITIES. Zoom. Join Trees Forever Program Manager Jeff Jensen to learn more about what a roadside plan is, why they are important, steps to completing a plan, grants your community may be eligible for, and how Trees Forever can help through the whole process. This is a great opportunity for city administrators, mayors, public works directors, street superintendents, and concerned citizens to learn about improving their communities and natural areas. Details at <https://treesforever.org/event/roadside-plan-may4/>.

Thursday, May 19, 4 to 6 P.M.

LEGACY RECEPTION AND MEMORIAL TREE PLANTING. Prairie Oak Lodge at Wanatee Park, 1600 Banner Dr., Marion. Join us to recognize all of the individuals honored or memorialized through a donation to the Trees Forever Foundation, the Granting a Better Tomorrow Endowment Fund and planned gifts. Together we will plant a few trees in our memorial grove. We invite friends and family members to write notes to their loved ones and place the notes in the soil before the trees are planted. As we think of the future and the new life being planted, we'll take a moment to reflect and thank those who have created this legacy. Your generosity is a testimony to a brighter, better tomorrow. RSVP at <https://treesforever.org/event/memorialtrees/>.

Additional Resources/Event Opportunities

100 Grannies

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

Bur Oak Land Trust

www.facebook.com/BurOakLandTrust/events

Iowa State Extension

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

Johnson County-ISU Extension

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

Linn County-ISU Extension

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

New Pioneer Coop

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



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Mail can be sent to:

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