2012 Marion County Photo Contest—Enter Today!

Marion County Extension and the Marion County Development Commission (MCDC) have once again joined together to sponsor the annual Marion County Photo Contest. The contest is open to all amateur photographers. Each person can submit up to 10 photographs. These can be all in one category or split between several categories.

Categories include scenic (e.g., landscape and water scenes, historical and outdoor structures, skylines, and gardens), wildlife (e.g., animals, plants, and insects), and people (residents having fun, action shots—people doing things; no portraits, please). All photos must be taken in Marion County.

Photographs should have a resolution of at least 240 dpi at 11 x 14 inches or be from an original photo negative, print, or slide.

There are two divisions for each category; Adult (age 18 and up) and Youth (age 17 and under). Photographers should use their age on January 1, 2012 to determine the division in which to enter.

Entries will be judged by a panel on their creativity, photographic quality and their effectiveness in portraying Marion County. The three top photos in each category will be selected for exhibit throughout the county in the year following the contest. Photos will also be used in a 2013 Marion County Calendar. 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place ribbons will be awarded in each category. A Best of Show prize will also be awarded.

The entry deadline is Wednesday, June 13, 2012 at noon.

To enter, send or deliver CDs to Marion County Extension, 210 N. Iowa St., Knoxville, IA  50138, or email entries (one photo per email) to kackley@iastate.edu. An entry form must be attached to each CD or accompany each email. Forms (and additional information) are available at the Marion Extension Office or online at www.extension.iastate.edu/marion.

For additional questions, contact Karen Ackley, Ag/Horticulture Assistant, Marion County Extension Office, 641-842-2014, kackley@iastate.edu.
Freeze Injury to Landscape Plants

Adapted from an article by Richard Jauron, ISU Dept. of Horticulture and Laura Jesse, ISU Plant & Insect Diagnostic

The unusually mild spring weather followed by below freezing temperatures on April 10 and 11 combined to produce widespread freeze injury to landscape plants. The extent of plant damage depends on several factors, including temperature, duration of the below freezing temperatures, plant species, and stage of plant growth.

Newly emerged foliage is the most susceptible to damage from below-freezing temperatures and the worst-hit plants appear to be those trees that had just started to leaf out, including hackberry, saucer magnolia, and ginkgo. Symptoms of freeze damage include shriveling and browning or blackening of damaged tissue. Damaged growth often becomes limp. Eventually, damaged or destroyed leaves may drop from the tree or shrub.

The majority of conifers appears to be unharmed at this time, though as new growth appears watch for wilting and browning of new growth.

What can be done to help cold-injured trees? Not a great deal, in most cases. The good news is that the cold temperatures shouldn’t have a long-term effect on most plants. Healthy trees and shrubs have the ability to re-leaf if the initial growth is damaged or destroyed. Healthy, well-established trees and shrubs should not be greatly harmed and will produce additional growth within a few weeks. This summer, water recently-planted trees every seven to ten days during dry periods to help recovery. Consider mulching the root zone as an aid to overall tree health. Remove dead branches, but be sure they are actually dead (i.e., dry and brittle) before making any pruning decisions. We do not recommend the use of fertilizers on trees or other ornamentals.

The freeze was damaging to some perennials, including hosta. Portions of the leaves have turned white and collapsed. Carefully remove damaged leaves and maintain good care through spring and summer to maintain plant health and vigor. Severely damaged plants will regrow from the crown or roots, but will be smaller than usual this summer.