If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need.
- Cicero

Life’s a garden. dig it.

PLAY IN THE DIRT.
Because life is too short to always have clean fingernails.

garden therapy

“We might think we are nurturing our garden, but of course it’s our garden that is really nurturing us.”
- Jenney Vogtman

"Why try to explain miracles to your kids when you can just have them plant a garden."
- Robert Brault

GARDENING IS CHEAPER THAN THERAPY AND YOU GET TOMATOES

WORTHWHILE DIRT

August 2018
Muscatine County

Courtesy www.pinterest.com
Upcoming General Meeting & Event Highlights
Coordinated by Jane Hodge, Master Gardener

August 18, 9am Saturday Coffee in Zoo Garden

August 23, 6:30 pm Webcast — Compost 101 and Growing Roses at Muscatine County ISU Extension Office

Sept 6 — Potluck for Zoo Garden Team at Sunrise Shelter

Sept 7, 1-4pm — Pollinator Tour at Tipton USDA Office

Sept 11, 6:30 pm — MG Board Meeting at ISU Extension Office

Sept 26, 8am — United Way Day of Caring at Zoo Garden

Oct 6, 8am—4pm — Backyard Forest Conference at Johnson County Extension Office

Oct 9, 6:30 pm — General Meeting at ISU Extension Office - Tami Schmidt will present the prairie rejuvenation she has done at her Milan home.

Nov 13, 6:30 pm — MG Board Meeting at ISU Extension Office

Dec 11, 6:00 pm — MG Annual Meeting at New Hope Church

See ISU Website for additional information and many more opportunities:
http://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/events

See page 5 for remaining Farmers Market dates

See page 16 for Nature Conservancy events

To Schedule Home Garden Tours: Call Jane 563.272.1638

Phlox make a statement in July-August
Remarks from the Chair

By Ed Moreno, Master Gardener, Chair

What a busy July! I was able to make a few of the Muscatine Master Gardener (MMG) events and enjoyed them all.

- Joined fellow MMG’ers for the Fern Walk on the 10th. This was very interesting and informative. I had not been to Weed Park for many years and plan to go back soon.

- The Muscatine County Fair started with the parade in West Liberty on the 15th. We had three floats; Gentle Family Dentists, West Liberty Youth Dream Catchers, and West Liberty Lions Club….none of which won a ribbon.

- The University of Iowa Upward Bound program coordinated with the Muscatine Master Gardeners to display information on plants, trees, pollinators, and flowers, at the Floral Hall on the 20th. They gave away six (6) trees and bushes, including a cherry tree using a spin wheel to draw people in. They helped draw much interest to the Floral Hall and had lots of fun.

- Manned the Floral Hall on the 22nd. It smelled great and I got to see all the displays.

- Attended the ISU Muscatine County Research Garden Tour on the 24th. This is always fun and interesting. Learn about ‘bag worm’, too.

- And, last but not least, sharing the downtown West Liberty hanging flower basket daily watering with fellow MMG, Ron Jensen.

  That’s me in the tractor pulling the WL Youth Dream Catcher ‘Pew’ Float, and chilling at Muscatine County Floral Hall.

As you are aware, there will not be a General Meeting in August. We are all very busy with the growing season in full bloom, no pun intended! Look forward to seeing you all at the next General Meeting in October. Enjoy the rest of the Summer.

Here is a selfie taken at 6:00AM with my watering equipment. Thank goodness Ron and I share this project!
The Zoo Garden is in need of a gardener to take on the responsibilities for leading the effort to make a large part of the Butterfly Garden even better. Unfortunately, our current gardener-leader is unable to finish the season. So, if we could find one or two Master Gardeners to take over and give us a hand, please let me know. Maybe we could job-share to suit individual schedules.

Yes, it is really August. Wow, the summer is starting to wind down for us at the Zoo Garden. Because of the lack of rain, we have been spending extra time watering the garden beds. Even with dry conditions the garden is looking good.

The Zoo Garden Committee met this week, looked over the calendar, and this is the remaining events that will finish the 2018 season.

**August 18 Saturday Coffee:** A tree will be planted and dedicated by the Daughters of the American Revolution. Kellor and Kellor will present a check to the Zoo Garden. Mayor Broderson will also be in attendance. Plus a speaker.

**Thursday, September 6:** Pot-luck at the Sunrise Shelter for Zoo Garden Team and helpers.

**Wednesday, September 26:** United Way Day of Caring

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**ATTENTION:**

The Butterfly Garden needs help immediately!

Please join in these Zoo Garden activities

These two photos are showing part of the Butterfly Garden in the Zoo Garden.
Farmers Market

By Rachel Horner Brackett, Master Gardener

Remaining Farmers Market Dates for Master Gardeners:

August 4
August 11
August 18
August 25
September 1 – Labor Day Weekend
September 8
September 15
September 22
September 29

Here is a photo from the July 21 Farmers Market in downtown Muscatine!
Bucket Brigade at Muscatine County Fair
Lead By Linda Wells and Barb Woods
Both Master Gardeners

Left: Judges deliberating
Right: Our Coordinators
Left Middle: Our Winners
Right Middle: Adult Entries
Bottom Left: Youth A Entries
Bottom Right: Youth B Entries
Muscatine Island Research and Demonstration Farm Home Demo Garden Field Day  By Dominic Snyder, ISU Research Farm

“The theme for this year’s planting is the rainbow, with vegetables planted to be donated to nearby food pantries ranging in colors like pink tomatoes, purple snap beans, yellow cauliflower and orange winter squash,” said Dr. Cindy Haynes.
Fern Exploration at Wild Cat Den State Park

By Jane Hodge, Master Gardener

Explorers at the July 10 Fern Event

Bob Bryant, our Fern Specialist, showing us a silvery spleenwort fern.

Photo left: One of the most unusual ferns at Wild Cat Den: Walking Fern

Photo Above: Another lovely fern: Maidenhair fern
Enjoying the Gardens at Plum Grove, Iowa City

By Lynn Pruitt, Master Gardener

Each of the gardens was precisely laid out and documented on display boards

In addition to the wonderful gardens, we were treated to a guided tour of Iowa’s First Governor’s Mansion

The Johnson County Master Gardeners were very welcoming and had great knowledge of their gardens

The group of Muscatine County Master Gardeners who visited Plum Grove on Sunday, July 15 were treated to wonderful gardens, hospitality and snacks!
Even though school is out for the summer, the Flickinger Learning Center students are able to stop by the Hy-Vee Main Street Garden and see the “fruits” of their labors. Thanks to Nancy Dew, recently retired from Hy-Vee, for serving as our coordinator and mentor to the kiddos. Residents at the adjacent Jesus Mission have been very faithful in watering and pulling the occasional weed. They are also doing the harvesting as the various vegetables ripen.

Our strawberry bed is looking good for next spring!
More Produce nearly ready for harvest

Example of our product — We're also getting peppers and tomatoes now.

Rick Crooks watering tomatoes, green peppers and cucumbers
The West Liberty Donation Garden project is going very well. We are currently at about 200 lbs, donated to the West Liberty and Muscatine food pantries. This figure does not include the community garden harvests. Below are some nice pictures of the project:

**Garden Site**

**Beautiful Harvest**

*Drip irrigation system used to direct and conserve water used in the gardens*

*‘Meter in a Crate’ used to monitor the amount of water donated by the City of WL to the garden from the WL Community Center.*
395 pounds so far !!!

We have harvested zucchini, summer squash, potatoes, onions, cabbage, pumpkin, jalapeño, and tomatoes.

The United Way interns helped place mulch and get watering system started. Oh and don’t forget the pulling weeds part they dug the potatoes and onions. A little education was done with the HNI interns: as they were placing the soaker hoses one asked, “so where are the tomatoes you wanted watered?” He was standing in the middle of the tomato patch. So now this city intern will recognize a tomato plant!

There is a new solar electric fence to deter deer from eating the peppers—they ate the entire first crop!! Rabbits still help themselves but their appetite is smaller.

Brussels sprouts from donation garden
Master Gardener 2018 Summer Webcast Series

GROWING SEASON

Insect Update & Tree Care
6:30-8:30 | Thursday, June 28
Get the latest details about invasive garden pests. Then learn about how to maintain the health of your trees.

Local Bees & Organic Vegetables
6:30-8:30 | Thursday, July 26
Find out how you can attract native bees and other pollinators to the garden. Then learn how to organically maintain your vegetable garden.

Compost 101 & Growing Roses
6:30-8:30 | Thursday, August 23
Build your compost IQ. Then learn about how to grow roses that will make your garden shine.

Join us: Webcasts are FREE and Open To The Public!
Call to reserve your spot at 563-263-5701 or KristaR@iastate.edu
All webcasts will be held at the Muscatine County Extension Office,
1514 Isett Avenue, Muscatine

All webcasts count towards your Master Gardener continuing education hours.

www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener
Guided group tours are available daily.

To request a tour, call 515-795-3216.

For more information, visit iowaarboretum.org

TOUR THE IOWA ARBORETUM

Come tour the Iowa Arboretum, with its 40-acres of beautiful trees, flowers, and plants. Guests can enjoy the collection of hostas, herbs, daylilies, iris, conifers, dwarf conifers, deciduous trees, and much more by participating in either a walking or riding 45 minute tour. Explore specialty gardens such as the Children’s Garden and Butterfly Garden. In addition to the guided tour, guests can enjoy a variety of native Iowa birds, a charming gift shop, and seasonal greenhouse. Your day at the Iowa Arboretum is guaranteed to be memorable.

Small Group-$50
(20 or less)
Large Group-$100
(21 or more)

1875 Peach Avenue
Madrid, Iowa
By Hannah Howard

There are so many exciting events and programs coming up, we hope you'll join us! Check out the highlights below and the fliers attached for more information. If you'd like to share any of these events on Facebook, let me know and I can send you jpeg versions of the fliers and/or links to the Facebook events!

* **Beginners Guide to Dragonflies and Damselflies**: Join us for an evening of hiking and learning how to identify dragonflies and damselflies! Wed, Aug 8th, 5:00 to 7:00 pm, Maytag Nature Preserve. Event is free.

* **Iowa Master Conservationist Program**: The Iowa Master Conservationist Program gives Iowans hands-on interaction with and in depth knowledge of Iowa's natural resources. Topics include Geology, Prairies, Aquatic Systems, Forests and Watersheds. Program consists of online curriculum and weekly field trips to beautiful natural areas in Muscatine and Louisa Counties. Thursdays, Aug 30th through Oct 11th, 6:00 to 9:00 pm. Registration fee is $100, only a few spots are left!

* **Women, Land & Legacy Listening Session**: Women who own farmland or farm in Cedar/Muscatine/Scott Counties are invited to join their local Women, Land & Legacy (WLL) team at one of two upcoming Listening Sessions. The Listening Session is an opportunity for women who are engaged in agriculture and land management to share, connect and grow a support network in the region with other women who care for the land. Mon, Sept 10th, Durant Community Center. Two listening sessions will be held, join the afternoon session from 2:00 to 4:00 pm or the evening session from 6:30 to 8:30 pm.

* **Cedar River Ramble**: Join us for a day of discovery, nature and paddling on the Cedar River! The paddle will take place Sat, Sept 29th from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Space is limited, RSVP today! $5/ person

* **Swamp Stomp**: Save the Date! The 2nd Annual Swamp Stomp will be held Sun, Oct 7th from 1:00 to 6:00 pm, at Ardon Creek Winery.
Backyard Forest Conference
Saturday, October 6, 2018
Johnson County ISU Extension Office 3109 Old Hwy 218 S. Iowa City, IA
8:30 a.m. to 3:40 p.m. Registration begins at 8 a.m.

Topics include:
- Trees and Shrubs for Pollinators
- Chainsaw Safety and Felling
- Invasive Species and Management
- Forest Stand Improvement
- Planting Trees and Shrubs
- Backyard Food Crops
- Backyard Woodland Wildlife
- Establishing Tree Seedling Pocket Plantings
- Woodland Prescribed Fire
- Woodland Health and Basic Tree ID

Conference includes workshops and a 2-hour walk through Ryerson Woods. Registration fee is $15 and includes lunch and materials. Please register by October 1.

Registration: www.treesforever.org/BackyardForest

Partners: Trees Forever, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Forest Service
For more information: Aaron Brewer, abrewer@treesforever.org, 319-373-0650 ext. 114

Funding for this program is provided by:
Trees Forever • DNR • UAS • Trees Forever Members and Holloway Family Environmental Trust
POLLINATOR TOUR 2018

WHEN
September 7
1pm-4pm

WHERE
Meet at USDA FSA/NRCS Service Center
205 West South St. Suite 2, Tipton, IA

WHAT
Driving/ Hiking Tour

FEATURING PRAIRIE RESTORATION PROJECTS BY:
Ken Fawcett, Larry Hodyden, Teresa Wendt

Call or email Lydia to reserve a spot for the tour-
Lydia.whitman@ia.nacdnets.net/ 563-886-6214 ext. 3

USDA IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER.
Late Summer Lawn Care[https://hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/2018/07/late-summer-lawn-care]
By Richard Jauron, Department of Horticulture

Sunflowers – Symbols of Summer[https://hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/2018/07/sunflowers-%E2%80%93-symbols-summer]
By Cindy Haynes and Ann Marie VanDerZanden, Department of Horticulture

Hardy Hibiscus or Rose Mallows for Iowa[https://hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/2018/07/hardy-hibiscus-or-rose-mallows-iowa]
By Cindy Haynes, Department of Horticulture

Bagworms Possibly Still Treatable[https://hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/2018/07/bagworms-possibly-still-treatable]
By Donald Lewis, Department of Entomology

Japanese Beetle Emergence and Longevity[https://hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/2018/07/japanese-beetle-emergence-and-longevity]
By Mark Shour, Pesticide Safety Education Program

First Jumping Worm Appearance Confirmed in Iowa[https://hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/2018/07/first-jumping-worm-appearance-confirmed-iowa]
By Laura Jesse and Donald Lewis, Plant and Insect Diagnostic Clinic

Monarch and Pollinator Habitat Field Day, August 21, 2018[https://hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/2018/07/monarch-and-pollinator-habitat-field-day-august-21-2018]

Master Gardener Training Registration is Open[https://hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/2018/07/master-gardener-training-registration-open]
By Susan DeBlieck, Master Gardener Program Coordinator

By Richard Jauron and Cindy Haynes, Department of Horticulture
Hot, dry summer weather can be tough on Kentucky bluegrass and other cool-season grasses. Good cultural practices in late summer can help revive stressed lawns. Important late summer cultural practices include mowing, overseeding, aeration, and fertilization.

Mowing
In September, lower the mowing height from 3.0 to 3.5 inches to 2.5 to 3 inches. Continue to mow the lawn until the grass stops growing in late October/early November. When mowing the lawn, never remove more than ⅓ of the total leaf area at any one time.

Overseeding
Mid-August through mid-September is the best time to renovate a thin lawn. Sowing grass seed in late summer has several advantages over spring seeding. Cool-season grass seeds germinate quickly in the warm soils of late summer. Once the grass germinates, the warm days and cool nights of fall promote rapid turf growth. Also, there will be less competition from weeds as few weed seeds germinate in late summer and fall. To reduce the competition from the established turfgrass, mow the lawn at a height of 1½ to 2 inches. Successful overseeding requires good seed-to-soil contact. Core aerators, vertical mowers, and slit seeders can be used to insure good seed-to-soil contact. After seeding, keep the upper 1 inch of soil moist with frequent, light applications of water. The seeds of most turfgrasses should germinate in 2 to 3 weeks if the seedbed is kept uniformly moist. Gradually reduce the frequency of watering, but water more deeply, when the grass seedlings reach a height of 1 to 2 inches.

Aeration
Early September is the best time to aerate lawns in Iowa. Aeration relieves soil compaction, improves water and nutrient movement in the soil, and prevents thatch accumulation. Aerate lawns with a core aerator. Core aerators have hollow metal tubes or tines that remove plugs of soil. Avoid spike-type devices that simply punch holes (compacting the soil) in the ground. Remove soil cores that are approximately three-fourths of an inch in diameter and 3 inches long. For best results, aerate lawns when the soil is moist. Avoid aeration when soils are dry or wet. The tubes or tines will not be able to penetrate deeply when the soil is dry and may get plugged with soil when the soil is wet. Lawns that are properly aerated should have 20 to 40 holes per square foot. Since most core aerators won’t remove the proper number of holes with a single pass, several passes are often necessary. After aeration, pull a drag mat or weighted piece of fencing material across the lawn to break up the soil cores on the soil surface.

Fertilization
Mid-September is an excellent time to fertilize lawns. An application of fertilizer in late summer stimulates turfgrass growth and encourages the grass to fill-in thin spots. Apply no more than 1 pound of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet.
Whether gardening, taking a hike, going to a park, or farming, there are a multitude of “unfriendly plants” that will cause most people issues and are “dangerous”.

Plants may be considered “dangerous” when they affect our health, especially in children and elderly people. Often the danger isn’t so much the plant, but our reaction to it. Some people suffer based on an allergic reaction to plants that are for the most part, harmless. Some plants produce chemicals that are poisonous when eaten.

It seems like so many people are buying medications for both indoor and outdoor allergies. Maybe it is for a runny noses, congestion, asthma, and burning eyes. Sometimes these allergic reactions are serious, or maybe a discomfort.

Many plants produce pollen or spores that are breathed in through our nose and lungs and cause allergic reactions. Some of the more common allergens are from oaks, maples, and other tree pollens, grass and ragweed pollen, fungi, and molds.

It is the wind-blown pollens, like that of ragweed, that are responsible for our allergies. Heredity and exposure are the two factors that most determine if a person will become allergic to a substance.

We want to share some of the common plants that cause problems for people in our area.

**Poison ivy** grows as a small plant, vine, or shrub. The leaves are compound, with three leaflets. The slogan “leaflets of three, let it be” as a means for avoiding poison ivy. However, other plants, like raspberries, strawberries have leaflets of three. Other characteristics of poison ivy are a shiny leaf appearance and a lack of thorny or fuzzy stems. The leaflets grow alternately up the plant.

(Continued next page, UNFRIENDLY PLANTS)
Poison ivy is perhaps the most known poisonous plant in Iowa. The plant has poisonous oil found throughout the plant, and the only way to contract the poison is by skin contact with the oil. We do not have poison oak in our area. People should be aware of poison ivy as they walk along trails, wooded areas or fence rows or cutting firewood. Once identified, the plant is easy to avoid. But contact with poison ivy may cause serious discomfort in the form of itching, burning, and blisters which sometimes become infected.

**Stinging nettles** is another very common poisonous plant in our area. When you brush up against stinging nettles, the plant hairs deliver a small dose of poison. The poison is actually injected through the plant hair like a needle prick. Stinging nettles range in height from six inches to six feet. The stem is stiff and covered with the stinging hairs. The leaves grow opposite each other along the stem and may be 2 to 6 inches long.

**Wood nettle** is also found in our area and has similar stinging hairs. It is a shorter plant with alternate leaves. Like poison ivy, nettles are easy to avoid once they have been identified. Reactions to nettles are generally not as severe as with poison ivy.

We have found that you can get small itching or burning bumps or welts on your skin. The reaction usually wears off in a short time. Nettles can affect livestock and other animals.

There are a number of plants that affect people through contact. When walking through a field, a person may begin to itch and form welts as the leaves and stems of plants come in contact with legs and arms. These reactions are worse on a hot humid day as you perspire.

**Wild parsnip** has become more prevalent in our area. In the presence of moisture and sunlight, contact with wild parsnip causes an allergic reaction for many people. It starts out as an itch that can burn and blister. Wild parsnip contains chemicals in the juices of its green leaves, stems and fruits that can cause
an intense, localized burn. Wild parsnip is everywhere; just notice it as you drive our roads. If you do find that you or a loved one has come into contact with wild parsnip, immediately cover the skin that was exposed to the plant. It is extremely important to keep the sunlight away from the sap-absorbed skin, as this reaction will cause the painful blistering.

**Hemlocks** have a deceptively pleasing smell of parsley. They are in the same plant family as parsley and carrots, but hemlocks are deadly poisonous. They are identified by having fernlike leaves and large cupped or flat flower heads composed of many small flowers. All parts of the plant are poisonous; especially the roots and they are harmful if swallowed. Poison hemlock contains eight known alkaloids that are extremely toxic to humans, livestock, and wildlife. Pigs are the most susceptible to poison hemlock, followed by cattle, then horses, sheep, and goats. Livestock should not be grazed on infested pastures during the early spring when poison hemlock is one of the primary green forage plants. Livestock are more likely to consume poison hemlock via contaminated hay.

**Bittersweet nightshade** is a common plant of Iowa woodlands and is extremely poisonous. The plant produces dark purple berries and white star-shaped flowers. I’ve mostly seen this vine growing on fences at the edges of yards, rather than in unspoiled habitat. This “semi-woody vine” is sometimes known as climbing nightshade, or European bittersweet. It has become widespread in Iowa. Although this is not the same plant as deadly nightshade, bittersweet nightshade is somewhat poisonous and has caused loss of livestock and pet poisoning and, more rarely, sickness and even death in children who have eaten the berries. Fortunately, bittersweet nightshade has a strong, unpleasant odor, so most animals will avoid it, and poisonings from this plant are not very frequent. The bittersweet grows prolifically on our fences at the farm.

**Multiflora rose** was thought to be a good wildlife plant. Multiflora rose was promoted for the wrong reasons while being
planted widely throughout the Midwest. But when these plants were placed in their new Iowa soils, they quickly spread out of control, and difficult to remove from the landscape. There are two ways multiflora rose spreads. Birds eat the fruit, distributing the seeds. These seeds can remain viable in the soil for a long period of time. The other way this rose spreads when the cane tips touch the ground and grow roots, forming a new plant. This shrub grows six to ten feet tall and can occasionally reach fifteen feet in height. The targeted removal of multiflora rose often requires an aggressive technique.

**Garlic Mustard** is considered one of the most destructive plants that we are contending with in our landscapes. As I travel throughout eastern Iowa rural roads, I am amazed that Garlic Mustard is everywhere, and spreading rapidly. Garlic mustard is self-fertile and is very difficult to eradicate once it is established in an area. It spreads rapidly and unfortunately, displaces native plants. Each plant can produce thousands of seeds which can be spread by wildlife, humans, water, or wind. Garlic mustard has a biennial life cycle, meaning that it completes its life cycle over a two-year period. Seedlings germinate in the spring and form into basal rosettes. An average plant produces 400-500 seeds that germinate readily in all environments. It's important to know when pulling garlic mustard you should always make sure that the taproot is completely removed or it will sprout again. All cuttings should be burned or buried.

**Purple loosestrife** is an invasive perennial plant with spikes of bright purple flowers that bloom in mid- to late summer. However, it is primarily a wetland plant. Because this plant is so showy, it has been planted in many private gardens, until recently. Purple loosestrife spreads rapidly via seeds, roots and stem fragments. A single mature plant can produce more than 2 million seeds per year. Wind, water and animals spread the seeds, which grow into new seedlings the following spring. It is a very hardy perennial which can rapidly degrade wetlands, diminishing their value for wildlife habitat. The seeds from purple

*(Continued next page, UNFRIENDLY PLANTS)*
loosestrife are washed by rain into storm sewers, and eventually waterways. Wetlands are the most biologically diverse, productive component of our ecosystem. Hundreds of species of plants, birds, mammals, reptiles, insects, fish and amphibians rely on healthy wetland habitat for their survival. I have noticed many of the Mississippi backwaters have abundant purple loosestrife growing.

Reed canary grass is a large, coarse grass that reaches 2 to 9 feet in height. They are green to purple at first and change to beige over time. This grass is one of the first to sprout in spring, and forms a thick rhizome system that dominates the subsurface soil. Seeds are shiny brown in color. Reed canary grass also resembles non-native orchard grass, but can be distinguished by its wider blades, narrower, more pointed inflorescence. This species can invade most types of wetlands, including marshes, wet prairies, and stream banks.

Jimsonweeds, locoweeds, and some types of mushrooms are very poisonous when swallowed. Many plants such as ground plum, May apple, and black cherry are poisonous during their development but are safe to eat when fully ripened. Remember, caution is required when considering eating any wild plant. Carefully research the plant or consult an edible plants expert before eating!

Bineweed Field bindweed is one of the most persistent and difficult-to-control weeds in landscapes and agricultural crops. It has a vigorous root and rhizome system that makes it almost impossible to control with cultivation between desirable plants or broad scale tillage alone; in fact, it often spreads the infestation. Its seed has a long dormancy and can last in soil for up to 60 years. It has a climbing habit that allows the plant to grow up. In addition rhizomes have the ability to penetrate through fabric, plastic, and other barriers. Field bindweed also is very drought tolerant and once established is difficult to control even with herbicides. If field bindweed is present, land is devalued and the weed precludes planting of many vegetable crops.

(continue above right)
August Gardening Guide for Zone 5
(Courtesy of Midwest Gardening)

General tasks: Water, weed and mulch

-- Water, water, water! Lawn and flowers need about 1 inch of water a week to stay green and healthy. Use a rain gauge to make sure they're getting enough. If using a sprinkler, set out a pan or tuna can on the lawn to measure how much water falls. (Best time to water: early morning. It prevents evaporation and allows foliage to dry quickly to prevent disease.)

-- Weed, weed, weed! When the weather is hot, it's easy to avoid getting out in the garden. But work in the cool of morning or evening so the weeds don't take over.

-- Top off beds and other plantings with more mulch, if you want. It slows the return of weeds, conserves moisture, and prevents soil-borne diseases from spreading. Just remember: Mulch should be 1 to 3 inches deep, no deeper.

-- Start thinking about structural projects you might want to tackle this fall. Plan a path or an arbor that you want to build when the weather cools.

Containers: Water and pinch

-- Water containers often. In hot weather, they usually need watering daily and may even need watering twice a day -- especially thirsty plants such as fuchsia, impatiens and hibiscus.

-- If the container soil dries out and gets so hard that water runs rapidly down the inside surface of the pot, set the pot in a bowl or bucket of water halfway up the container's sides. After a couple of hours, the soil will rehydrate.

-- Every time you water container plants, pinch off yellowing or problem foliage and spent flower blooms to encourage more lush growth and flowers.

-- Fertilize containers every two weeks to assure plenty of growth and bloom. Use a bloom-booster fertilizer with flowering plants. (continue next page, GUIDE)
Flowers: Cut back and deadhead
-- Petunias getting ratty-looking? It's a good idea to cut all your annuals back by one- to two-thirds to encourage fuller, bushier growth with more flowers. In Zones 3-5, if your cool-season annuals such as snapdragons and lobelia have made it through summer's heat, cut them back by about half to encourage a fresh flush of growth and bloom in the cooler temperatures of fall.
-- Deadhead flowers regularly. Deadheading not only keeps your landscape tidy-looking, it also encourages certain flowers to bloom more.
-- Tackle diseased plant areas. If the plant is an annual and badly damaged, consider just tearing it out. This time of year, it's not likely to recover and will only look bad and possibly spread the problem to its neighbors. Otherwise, trim off an affected part of the plant and take it to a quality local garden center. They'll be able to diagnose the problem and recommend a solution.
-- In Zones 4-6, stop fertilizing roses and any other trees and shrubs. Fertilization will encourage new, tender growth that will get zapped by winter cold.

Vegetables: Pick and plant
-- Keep vegetables harvested. Harvesting encourages vegetables to keep producing well until fall. This is especially true with green beans, but also with green peppers, hot peppers, cucumbers, squash, eggplants and tomatoes.
-- In Zones 3-4, in late August or in early September, plant cool-season veggie crops such as lettuces, spinach and radishes. Be sure to keep them moist.
-- Set tuna cans, wire racks or other supports under small ripening melons to prevent them from rotting or attracting slugs from contact with the soil. Harvest cantaloupes after they turn from green to yellow and come off the vine with a gentle tug. Pick watermelons when they have a dark and crisp stem, shriveled tendrils close to the melon and a dull look with yellowish underside. Ripe watermelons also produce a dull thud when thumped.
2018 Master Gardener Committees — Chair persons
(There are still opportunities for volunteers)

Arboretum — Charles Rickey 563-260-5807
Art of Gardening — Susan Cradick 563-299-9114
Bucket Brigade – Barb Woods 563-506-4506 and Linda Wells 563-263-0292
Community Donation Gardens – Krista Regennitter 563-263-5701
Education — Jane Hodge 563-272-1638
Fair Floral Hall — Bill Koellner 319-627-4545
Farmer’s Market — Susan Cradick 563-299-9114
Helping Master Gardeners Enter Hours — Krista Regennitter 563-263-5701
Historian — Emma Mae Pruitt 319-723-4362
Hy-Vee — Mainstreet Garden — Lynn Pruitt 563-260-0234
Manning Desk at Extension Office – Krista Regennitter 563-263-5701
Member’s Garden Tours — Jane Hodge 563-272-1638
Mulford Community Gardens – Heather Harroun 563-554-0028
Muscatine Branching Out — Kathy Chalupa 563-299-0887
Muscatine Bridge Entry Sign Area — Chair position open
Muscatine County Fair Office Garden – Bill Koellner 319-627-4545
Newsletter — Lynn Pruitt 563-260-0234
Plant Sale — Heather Harroun 563-554-0028
Publicity — Ed Moreno 319-331-0713
Zoo Garden — Maryrose Peterschmidt 563-263-0846

Daylilies showing off in the summer

Now is the ideal time to volunteer to serve with one of the committees listed to the left. Just give a call to the listed chair person.

Please note there is one committee without a chair person. Give Laura McGinnis a call if you want to know what’s involved — 309-791-0054
**Muscatine County Extension Office**
1514 Isett Avenue
Muscatine, IA 52761-4629
563-263-5701 or 800-992-0894

Krista Regennitter
Muscatine County Extension Director
Master Gardener Liaison

"... and justice for all"

Iowa State University Extension programs are available to all without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability.

Iowa State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.

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**Current Emails and Addresses**

As a reminder – keep both the Extension Office and Lynn Pruitt current on any changes of e-mail addresses, phone numbers, or mailing addresses. These need to be current to keep you – our members – informed.

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**Was the Saturday Class on Campus your favorite part of the Iowa Master Gardener Training?**

You met with Master Gardeners from across Iowa, connected with university specialists, and did hands-on activities.

You can attend the Class on Campus on Saturday, November 3. The event includes hands-on workshops, lectures by professors, and lunch. Master Gardeners will earn 7 continuing education hours.

**Saturday, November 3**
8:30AM-3:30PM
Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa

Cost: $115
Free for 2018 Master Gardener trainees

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**2018 Muscatine County Master Gardener Board**

Board Members
Ed Moreno (18)* Chair
Heather Haroun (18)* Vice Chair
Candi Whitmer (19)* Sec/Treas
Kathy Halmeyer (18)*
Mary Danner (19)
Jane Hodge (19)
Ron Jensen (19)*
Maryrose Peterschmidt (18)*
Rachel Horner Brackett (Intern)

Lynn Pruitt (Past Chair Advisor)

( ) Year term expires as of Dec. 31
* Going off Board Dec 31, 2018/2019 but eligible for re-election

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**Editorial Comments:**

Please remember, this is YOUR newsletter. Your articles, photographs and other tidbits are welcome. Send them by the end of each month to pruitt.lynn@gmail.com or call 563.260.0234

— Lynn Pruitt, Editor —