

December 2019

Muscatine County



**WORTHWHILE
DIRT**

CONGRATULATIONS MG Trainees!!!



1601 Plaza Place, Muscatine

**Master Gardener
Board Meeting,
December 10, 2019;
6:30 pm at new
Extension Office,**

**Master Gardeners
Annual Meeting
Sunday, January 12,
2020; 1-3pm at**



New Hope United Methodist Church, 3215 Tipton Road

Bring a hearty appetizer to share, the board will provide the drinks. The church has another group coming in at 3:30 pm to set up by 4pm so we will need to clear out in time for them. Bring your spouse or guest to celebrate 2019 and plan for an even greater 2020.

Upcoming Meeting & Event Highlights Muscatine County Master Gardeners

Coordinated by Jane Hodge, Master Gardener



"I am happy to have served on the Master Gardener board these past four years! Thank you so much for your attendance at the events that were planned and supporting the speakers during the general meetings. Thank you so very much!"

Jane Hodge

— Stay tuned for the 2020 Program —

Master Gardeners Interns and Their Mentors

The following people have completed their education hours to become Master Gardener Interns for 2019-2020:

Angela Weber

Erin Parks

Lisa Freilinger

Teri Dibbern

Brandy Olson

Becky Schmertman

Beverly Hart

Jeff Shelley

Mike McGrory

These trainees experienced the new training program of listening to lectures at home. Then every two weeks on Saturday from 9:00 am- 1:00 pm, having speakers in the community talk about the topics covered in lecture. This format allowed more hands on experiences for the trainees.

We would like to encourage all members to welcome these Interns to the meeting, activities, and fundraisers our group has and to make them feel welcome. Each Intern has been matched up with a volunteer to be their mentor. Mentor pairs are as follows:

Angela Weber - Emma Mae Pruitt

Erin Parks - Jane Hodge

Becky Schmertman - Rachel Horner Brackett

Teri Dibbern - Susan Cradick

Brandy Olson - Maryrose Peterschmidt

Lisa Freilinger - Terri Hansen

Mike McGrory - Lynn Pruitt

Beverly Hart - QC

Jeff Shelley - QC

Thanks to all the mentors for helping the Interns become part of the Muscatine County Master Gardeners Group.

Kathy Haltmeyer and Rachel Horner Brackett

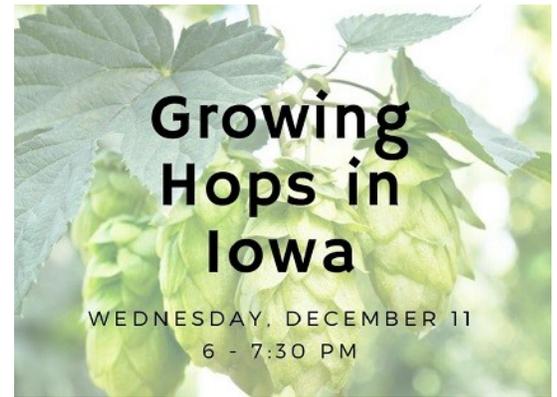
Growing Hops in Iowa

Wednesday, December 11

6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Muscatine County-ISU Extension and Outreach

1601 Plaza Place, Muscatine



Land owners looking at alternative crops, gardeners and home brewers are invited to learn about the Iowa hops industry and this new and exciting crop! Keri Byrum, owner of Cedar Falls Hops will share:

- * From roots to shoots, understanding hop anatomy and growth
- * How these unique plants are grown and harvested to make delicious Iowa beers
- * Structures for growing hops
- * Care, maintenance and harvesting of hops

Program Cost is Free. Register by Monday, December 9, by calling the Muscatine County - Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Office at 563-263-5701. Co-hosted by Cedar Falls Hops Company, Muscatine County Extension and Outreach and Cedar, Muscatine and Scott Counties Women, Land and Legacy Chapter

SIMPLE TIPS FOR GARDENERS

Compiled by Rachel Quillin

"I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I live."

George Bernard Shaw

HERB GARDENS

Herbs are a great option for container gardening, and the results add a lot of pizzazz to your cooking. Just use a good container and potting mix, and never over-fertilize.



Trees Forever Woodland Legacy Symposium

Thursday, December 12, 2019, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Cedar Rapids Country Club • 550 27th St Dr SE • Cedar Rapids, Iowa

This event brings together municipal and county leaders, business leaders, educators, engineers, developers, planners, architects, conservationists and activist citizens. Together we explore sustainable community development, considering the impact of trees and other green infrastructure on our local communities' livability, economy, wellness, and our children's ability to learn and thrive.

Keynote Speech: Bringing Open Spaces to our Urban Lives

George Hess, Ph.D., North Carolina State Department of Forestry and Environmental Resources

Natural areas and green spaces in cities support healthy cultures, people, and environments. Our challenge is to reach "beyond the choir" and connect the dots in compelling and inclusive ways that bring everyone on board with the need to conserve nature in the city. Why? Because green spaces help protect clean water and natural habitats, provide opportunities for local farms and food, connect people with nature, and support public health and economic vitality. Dr. Hess will summarize research that supports these benefits, share initiatives that spread the message of conservation to the non-conservation communities, and review practices that make it work.

Morning Panel

Bringing Nature Near

Learn about local initiatives that are bringing nature to where we live and work, and why they are important to you and our community.

Afternoon Concurrent Panels (choose one)

Building Nature In: Why, where and how to include nature in planning and development.

This is an interactive workshop for planners, developers and engineers to discuss current development examples, and the opportunities and challenges of including open spaces.

Bringing Nature Home

This interactive workshop will feature a variety of local perspectives to help you plan and plant for conservation on your property and in your neighborhood.

Cost is \$50 for Trees Forever members, \$75 for non-members, and \$25 for students/AmeriCorps members.

To register see Website: <http://www.treesforever.org/Symposium>

Save the Date!

ART OF GARDENING

March 21, 2020

Presented by:



 **DON'T FORGET** 

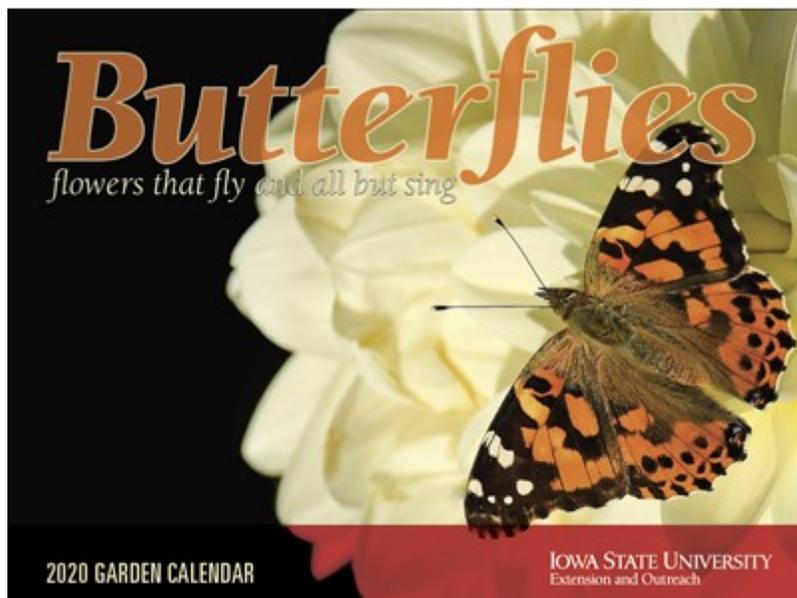
TO ENTER HOURS!

 mastergardenerhours.hort.iastate.edu/

2020 Garden Calendar - Butterflies: flowers that fly and all but sing - *available now!*

Floating lightly on the breeze, butterflies add beauty to any garden. The butterfly takes center stage in the 2020 Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Garden Calendar, showcasing the vibrant colors and majestic beauty that makes them such a welcome part of any backyard or garden. This 12-month calendar showcases butterflies throughout the year, as they bring their special beauty to each page.



The large calendar grid offers space to create a gardening journal to record the progress of your own garden. Refer to the monthly tips that provide timely cultural information for fruits and vegetables, lawn care recommendations, tree and shrub guidance, and other information. Whether it be flowers, fruits, vegetables, trees, or turfgrass, this annual calendar provides tips on a variety of topics so that you can easily know what task should be completed next in your own garden.

Available for \$7 each at the Muscatine County Extension and Outreach Office.

SIMPLE TIPS FOR GARDENERS

Compiled by Rachel Quillin

COMMUNITY GARDEN PROS

The wonderful benefits of a community garden include bringing the community together, creating a natural space in city neighborhoods, teaching children about where their food comes from, and providing a place for people to grow their own foods.



Director's Input

By Krista Regennitter

Muscatine County Extension Director, Iowa State University Extension
and Outreach

Telephone 563-263-5701



Hello Master Gardener,

Hope you all enjoyed your Thanksgiving! As we prepare for the close of 2019 please remember to enter your volunteer and continuing education hours at <https://mastergardenerhours.hort.iastate.edu/>. As of November 26th 1,398.25 volunteer hours were entered by 19 Master Gardeners - I know you all did more than that!! I can't wait to see where we end up on December 31! If you need assistance Mary Danner mary@centraliowakfc.com<mailto:mary@centraliowakfc.com> has offered to help people get their hours entered.

I wanted to send a reminder - if anyone is interested in joining the Growing Together Iowa<<https://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/announcements/growing-together>> Mini Grant that funds donation gardens for local food pantries please contact me as grants are due in early January. Email me at kristar@iastate.edu<mailto:kristar@iastate.edu> or call 563-263-5701.

Make sure you have Saturday, March 21, 2020 on your calendar for Art of Gardening! A big shout out to the Art of Gardening planning committee, led by Susan Cradick, for all of their work in lining up presenters, vendors, lunch and all the organization needed to make this day happen. It is shaping up to be a great line up.

Look forward to seeing you all at the annual meeting in January!

Krista

SIMPLE TIPS FOR GARDENERS

Compiled by Rachel Quillin

*"Our England is a garden, and such gardens are not made
By singing: "Oh, how beautiful!" and sitting in the shade."*

— Rudyard Kipling —

November Master Gardener General Meeting Presentation By Nick Gow, Muscatine Parks & Rec



Master Gardeners showed great interest in the City's hanging basket program primarily because of their success over the past several years. Many were interested and impressed in the choice of basket, basket liner, growing material, plant cultivar, fertilizing techniques, trimming and watering. Nick did a great job presenting the program and answering questions to help Master Gardeners with beautiful and sustained hanging baskets in their own back yards.



Basket

▶ Size

- ▶ Choose a size of basket to fit where you would like to hang them.
- ▶ The arms on our light poles are 26" in length. Our baskets are 22" wide, to allow for flower growth over edge of basket. In high winds we do see some bare spots from the flowers rubbing on poles.

▶ Style

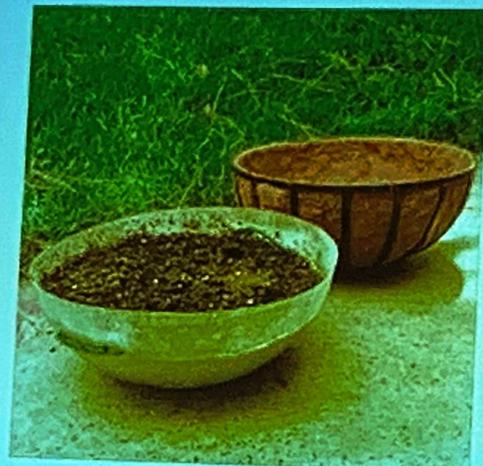
- ▶ Consider function and visual appeal.
- ▶ Baskets need to both retain moisture as well as have good drainage.
- ▶ As flowers are short and growing you still need to have an appealing basket liner to have hanging on street side.

▶ Liner

- ▶ To insure our baskets retain moisture we use a fiber glass insert to line the edges of the basket.
 - ▶ This not only helps retain moisture but also helps the coco liners last longer.
 - ▶ Fiber Glass Liners are a one time purchase, we have replaced coco liners as needed due to environmental wear and tear.

▶ Drainage

- ▶ Drainage is very important. Baskets can get water logged and create root rot.
- ▶ We were suggested to have at minimum a 6" hole in our inner liner at the bottom of our baskets to allow excess water to drain. (R. Boesen: Gloeckner Seed)



Yard and Garden: Over-wintering Potted Plants

October 31, 2019, 1:30 pm | Richard Jauron, Willy Klein — from ISU Extension Website

AMES, Iowa – It's hard enough to keep perennials in the ground alive during Iowa's extreme winters. It's much harder to over-winter potted trees, shrubs and plants. The bulk soil in the ground tends to moderate the temperatures; the small amount in pots tend to give up heat more readily. Horticulture specialists with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach offer several ways to over-winter potted plants. To have additional questions answered, contact Hortline at hortline@iastate.edu or 515-294-3108.

How can I over-winter container grown trees and shrubs?

Container grown trees and shrubs should not be left outdoors above ground over the winter months. The roots of most trees and shrubs are far less cold hardy than their aboveground stems or trunks. Container grown plants are growing in relatively small amounts of potting soil. The temperature of the potting mix may drop into the single digits if container grown plants are left above ground in winter. Single digit temperatures may damage or destroy the root systems of plants.



An excellent way for home gardeners to over-winter container grown trees and shrubs is to dig holes in a garden area and set the pots in the ground. After the plants have been placed in the holes, place soil around the pots as if planting them. Soil is a good insulator and will protect the plant's roots from extreme cold.

Container grown trees and shrubs can also be over-wintered by placing them in a moderately cold location (temperatures from 20 to 45 degrees Fahrenheit) over the winter months. The cold temperatures will keep the plants dormant until spring. An attached, unheated garage is often a suitable over-wintering location.

Container grown perennials can be over-wintered in a similar manner.

I have a miniature rose growing in a pot outdoors on my patio. How do I over-winter it?

A potted miniature rose can be kept as a houseplant through the winter months. Bring the plant indoors before a hard freeze. Place the miniature rose in a sunny window or under artificial lighting. Avoid sites near cold drafts or heat sources. Water the plant when the soil surface becomes dry to the touch. Apply a dilute fertilizer solution every two to four weeks through the fall and winter months.

Another option would be to over-winter the miniature rose outdoors. In early November, dig a hole in a protected garden location. Place the potted rose in the hole. Then place soil around the pot. Several days later, cover the bottom 8 to 10 inches of the rose with additional soil. The soil should remain in place through the winter months. In early April, remove the soil around the canes, carefully dig up the potted rose, and prune out any dead wood.

How do I over-winter the common fig?

Common or edible figs (*Ficus carica*) are not reliably cold hardy in Iowa. The stems of 'Chicago Hardy' (considered one of the hardiest edible fig cultivars) are hardy to 10 degrees Fahrenheit and the plant's roots are hardy to 15 to 20 degrees below zero. In Iowa, common figs are best grown in large containers and over-wintered in a cool location, such as an attached, unheated garage or cool basement.

Photo credit: pauws99/stock.adobe.com

APHIS* vs. tomato virus

By **JC Chong**

Professor of Entomology at Clemson Univ.

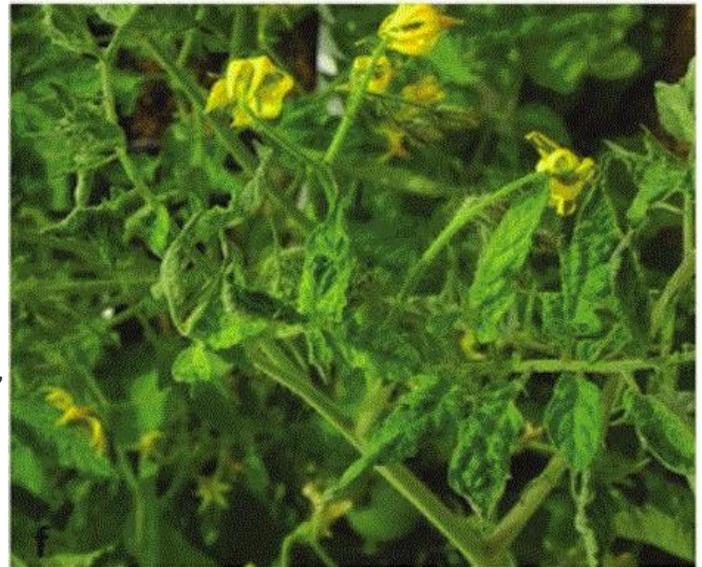
Here's a critter y'all may not have heard of — tomato brown rugose fruit virus (ToBRFV). But, if your livelihood depends on growing tomatoes and peppers, either indoor or outdoor, you know what I'm talking about.

ToBRFV is a tobamovirus that affects tomato, pepper, and some other solanaceous crops and weeds. Symptoms of infection include chlorosis, mottling and deformation on leaves, and yellow or brown spots, green stripes and deformation on fruits. The infected fruits become unmarketable. The disease was first described in 2014 in Israel, and later in several Middle Eastern and European countries, China and Mexico. There is currently no outbreak in the U.S.

ToBRFV is transmitted through contact (for example, contaminated tools and clothing) and propagated plant material (grafts and cuttings). The risk of transmission through imported fruit and plant material (seeds and transplants) is very high. Simply handling the infected plant material (such as infected fruits in your lunchbox) and later touching susceptible plants can transmit the virus. The virus can persist in the soil.

In order to protect domestic tomato and pepper production, APHIS has issued a Federal Import Order (effective November 22) restricting the import of tomatoes and peppers. APHIS requires that tomato and pepper fruit imported from Mexico, Israel, the Netherlands and Canada to be inspected and certified at the point of origin to ensure the crops are symptom-free. (Canada is a transit point for some fruit bound for the US.) Growers are required to eliminate infection before produce is exported to the U.S. Inspection of fruit from the above countries at the U.S. ports of entry will also be stepped up. APHIS has created a [webpage](#) to provide information on the Federal Order, along with frequently asked questions and certification guidelines.

* APHIS = **USDA** Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service



Mosaic on fruits and deformation of leaves caused by ToBRFV. (Photo credit: A. Dombrovsky and E. Smith, 2017, "Advances in Seed Biology.")

Plant Pioneers still Contribute Today

By Lynn Pruitt, Master Gardener



The Story of W. Atlee Burpee (1858-1915) — Atlee Burpee did not follow in the steps of his physician father but instead pursued a career in genetics; at first with the breeding of various types of livestock and dogs. In 1876, at age 18, he started the W. Atlee Burpee Company in Philadelphia with financing provided by his mother. American emigrants from Europe soon came to appreciate the quality of Burpee's livestock and asked him to expand his practice into vegetables (plants and seeds).

Burpee would tour Europe nearly every year to collect seeds and then introduce them to America. This worked well in the middle and northern climes of the U.S. which were similar to Germany and England, however growing conditions in the southern U.S. required special breeding to adapt to differences in seasonal conditions and problems with bacteria, fungi and viruses. Burpee bought the Fordhook Farm in Pennsylvania in 1888 to become his plant development and adaptation facility where he researched and developed various new cultivars through hybridization or selective breeding. Some of his early vegetable specialties were beets, cabbage, carrots and peas. Iceberg lettuce was introduced by Burpee in 1894. He introduced Golden Bantam sweet corn in 1902. In 1909 he tested sweet peas and other flowers at his new Floradale Farms in California. Later he established Sunnybrook Farms in New Jersey to experiment on eggplants, peppers, squashes and tomatoes.

By the 1890s Burpee had become the largest seed company in the world, primarily because of the reliability of his seeds and the utilization of mail order catalogues. He was also known for his philanthropic work including the Sunday Breakfast Rescue Mission which was one of the first homeless shelters in Philadelphia.



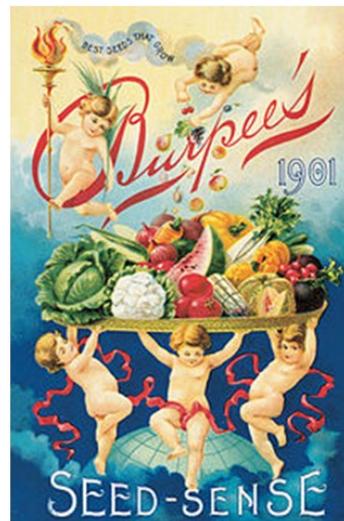
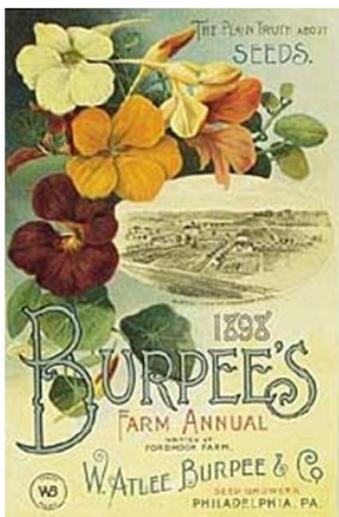
The Story of David Burpee (1893-1980) — David Burpee was 22 years old when his father passed away in 1915 and the younger Burpee took over management of the seed company. World War I caused a shortage of seeds from Europe but David Burpee was ready to fill the gap. He promoted "War Gardens" in major cities and as a result many people started growing their own vegetables. Later in the 1930s, David's hybridization of plants took off as a method to improve sustainability and quality of vegetables.

David maximized the production of flowers as well as vegetables. Key among the flowers he developed in the 1930s were the Double Hybrid Nasturtium, Crown of Gold Marigold, and Red and Gold Marigold. His experiments with colchicines from the crocus plant enhanced the blossoms of several flowers including snapdragons, black-eyed Susans and zinnias.

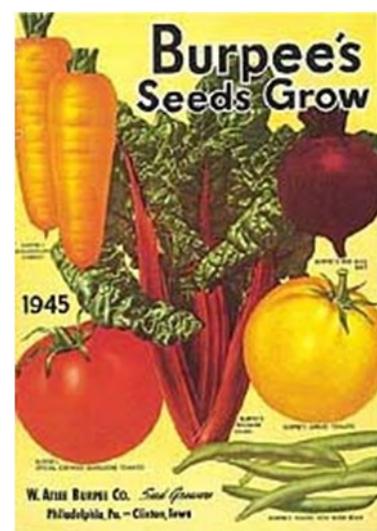
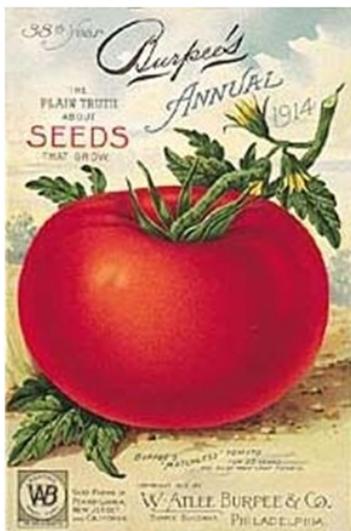
The Victory Garden Movement of World War II was instrumental in the formation of our modern era of home gardening and David Burpee was an avid promoter. His research provided new and improved vegetables for the cause. Among these in 1945 were the Burpee Hybrid Cucumber and the Fordhook Hybrid Tomato (later surpassed by his Big Boy Tomato in 1949).

While Burpee family members are no longer involved, W. Atlee Burpee & Co. is still in business today as a horticulture research organization and as a mail order seed and plant business. See next page for images of memorabilia from the Burpee family and their horticulture business.

Memorabilia from Burpee Seeds (story on previous page)



CAPTIONS: Corners are promotions from 1898, 1901, 1914 & 1945. Above shows early photos of Burpee and his plant. Left is David Burpee in his trial gardens in the 1930s. Right is Alice Vonk from Sully, Iowa being awarded \$10,000 prize for developing a white marigold in 1975. Below David Burpee works with his research team.





Trees and Shrubs for Birds

How to Attract Birds in Winter

By Gretchen Nollman, Master Gardener Intern,
and William Koellner, Lifetime Master Gardener



Winter is a great season for attracting birds if you provide what the birds need to survive the coldest months. Cold temperatures, snowstorms and scarce food supplies make winter the harshest season for wild birds, and bird mortality is highest during the winter period. Homeowners, communities and businesses who help meet birds' needs during the winter will be rewarded with a diverse flock of winter visitors.

Feeding birds and good shelter are the easiest ways to attract them to your yard in any season. Adding the best winter bird foods to your feeders when the temperatures drop will give birds adequate energy to survive even the worst weather. Foods high in oil and fat, such as suet, peanuts, sunflower seeds, peanut butter and Nyjer are the most popular choices, but it is important to tailor your backyard buffet to the exact needs of your winter flock.

Snow and ice may be frozen, but birds have no problem melting it to drink, but fresh, liquid water will readily attract many backyard birds in the winter. Add a heated bird bath to your yard to provide that water, and you'll be surprised with many birds that wouldn't normally stop at feeders. You can opt for a fully heated bird bath or add a heater attachment to your existing bird bath to keep the water fluid even in freezing temperatures. The bath should be kept fresh and

clean to avoid spreading illness, and it should be properly filled so the heater does not malfunction.

A cozy place to roost during winter months will keep your backyard birds secure and comfortable even in the worst weather. Bird roost boxes, nesting pockets and other winter bird shelters are essential to protect small birds from frigid breezes and dropping temperatures. For even more protection, place these winter shelters out of the way of northern winds or heavy snowfall, and offer birds a source of winter nesting material to use as insulation. For more natural shelter, build a brush pile or plant evergreen trees and shrubs that will offer protection to birds throughout the winter. Conifer trees provide the most protection for birds in all weather conditions.

Just as backyard birds may be more desperate during the lean times of winter, so are predators such as feral cats and backyard hawks. Illness can also devastate roosting winter flocks, and a sudden cold snap can freeze small birds. The best steps to protect your backyard birds are to provide good food, water and shelter, but you can also...

Clean feeders and bird baths regularly to prevent mold or bacteria that could spread disease. Position bird feeders to protect backyard birds from hawks, and be sure small

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birds have nearby plants or a brush pile for quick shelter if needed.

Start early in the autumn to prepare your yard for winter so birds can learn it is a safe place long before they are in desperate need. Leave leaf litter in place in your yard for the food, water and shelter it can provide overwintering birds. Choose bird-friendly landscaping that includes a selection of sheltering evergreen plants as well as plants that will provide fruit for a natural winter food source. Offer a variety of foods at your backyard feeders to attract the greatest number of bird species to your buffet.

The most important issue is planting bird- and insect-friendly native trees and shrubs is a great way to get started now on a property that will sustain wintering, migrating, and breeding birds. A great resource is the Iowa Department of Transportation booklet "Guide to Common Trees and Shrubs of Iowa."

Oaks: Oaks are considered one of the best "total" wildlife plants: no other plant tree supports more species of butterflies and moths, thus providing more types of bird food.

Bur oak is a handsome tree common to savannas and forests in Iowa. It is a long-lived tree and may survive 100-300 years in the right setting. The fruit is roundish to oblong acorn with gnarly cup extending half to over three quarters of the way around the nut. The acorns are utilized by a wide variety of wildlife and preferred over those of red oak.

Northern Pin Oak is a medium-height tree reaching 75 feet tall with a trunk diameter of 2 feet. It is considered a drought tolerant tree species. The fruit ripens the 2nd year, finely hairy cup enclosing 1/3 to 1/2 of acorn. The wildlife value is high in that cavities in northern pin oak trees are important for cavity-nesting bird species including wood ducks. Acorns are eaten by a wide variety of wildlife species.

Red Oaks are a medium to tall tree growing up to 80 feet tall with a trunk diameter capable of up to 3 feet. Trunks of the trees tend to be straight, with large spreading branches. The fruit is usually in pairs or as a single acorn. The wildlife value is that red oak trees provide cover and nesting sites for a variety of wildlife. Acorns are sought by a wide variety of wildlife, although acorns of red and pin oak are typically less preferred than those of white oak species. Deer and rabbits browse on the leaves and seedlings.

Swamp white oaks are large trees, growing to 100 feet or more, with an open, irregular crown, and deeply furrowed bark. They can live up to 300 years. The fruit is acorn that is oval-shaped, light brown in color. The wildlife value is the trees provide cover for a variety of birds and mammals. Wildlife including squirrels, mice, deer, and a variety of birds are attracted to the sweet acorns that are produced.

Cherries: Native cherries, such as Black Cherry and Common Chokecherry, provide not only food for birds but leaves that feed many types of caterpillars, from the

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large and striking Moth to the abundant Eastern Tent Caterpillar. Cuckoos, orioles, and many other woodland birds feed on tent caterpillars, while gnatcatchers pull away some of the caterpillar nests' silk for their own cup nests.

Choke cherry are often encountered as multiple-stem stands. Mature choke cherry can reach heights of 30 feet or more. They tend to have an irregular crown shape, becoming 10-20 feet wide when mature. The fruit are clusters of shiny, dark-red to deep-purple berries with a bitter taste. The wildlife value is the tree provides food and cover for a variety of wildlife as well as nesting habitat for birds. Many species of wildlife seek out and eat the fruit and deer seek out and browse on the tree during the winter months.

Black Cherry is the common name comes from the blackened color of the fruit when ripe. These trees may live to more than 250 years although most live to 80-100 years. It has a berry-like fruit becomes black when each fruit contains a single seed. The wildlife value is many species of birds and mammals find the seeds as a good source of food. Seeds are commonly dispersed by birds and mammals. The germination rate of the seeds is increased after being consumed and then passed by birds.

Birches: The complicated, peeling bark shelters many invertebrates, while the leaves attract hundreds of butterfly and moth species. Seeds and buds of these rather

small, somewhat short-lived trees attract birds and small mammals.

Paper birch is most prized as a landscape tree for its chalky white, peeling bark and fast growing nature. Paper birch is resistant to many insect pests and tolerates a broader range in soil pH than its cousin, river birch. The fruit is narrowly cylindrical, brownish, hanging on slender stalk. The wildlife value is white-tailed deer will browse paper birch twigs, while numerous birds and small mammals eat the buds, catkins and seeds.

River Birch is known for having a balanced, well-formed growth habit, river birch offers visual interest throughout the year. The ability to thrive on moist sites makes the river birch useful for landscape, wildlife and erosion control plantings. The fruit is cylindrical in shape, brownish in color. The wildlife value is that river birch is valuable to wildlife due to its spring-ripening fruit. Species including white-tailed deer browse on the young twigs, buds and foliage, while the seeds are a valuable food source for birds and rodents.

Dogwoods: Insects come to the flowers, and birds to the fall berries. There are eastern and western dogwood species, and trees as well as many shrubs. There are four varieties of Dogwood shrubs – Gray, red-osier, rough leaved, and silky. Most of the Dogwood shrubs grow to maturity of about 12 feet. The fruit is white in color, smooth on faces and furrowed on sides. The wildlife value for the gray, red-osier

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dogwoods attracts wildlife as a food source and as cover for small mammals and birds. The fruit is eaten by a variety of birds and the twigs are a favorite winter food of small mammals such as rabbits. The silky dogwood fruit matures in September and is bluish in color.

Hollies: Many of these trees and shrubs are evergreen, providing year-round shelter, nesting places, and berries that ripen late fall or into winter. Choose from trees such as American Holly or the deciduous shrub, Winterberry. Although birds love them, remember that holly berries are toxic to humans and pets.

Elderberry: The elderberries are shrubs or small trees that provide abundant flowers for insects, along with summer berries beloved by people and birds alike. You'll have to be fast if you want to keep some for yourself! American black elderberry", this woodland species is native to the area. It grows to a height of 8 to 12 feet and has large flat-topped clusters of white flowers that emerge in profusion in midsummer, followed by purple-black fruit in late summer and early fall.

Juniper These shrubs and trees produce berry-like fruiting bodies and year-round cover. Eastern Redcedar fruits are a staple for Cedar Waxwings. Red cedar is a coniferous tree that grows into a pyramidal shape. Its distinctive reddish-brown bark shreds into thin ribbons. The trees are often used in screen plantings and windbreaks. The wildlife value for the red cedar is reported to be utilized by over 60

species of wildlife for food and shelter. Juicy, bluish-colored berries serve as a good food source even during winter months.

Viburnums: These shrubs grow in the forest understory, attract myriad invertebrates to their flowers and leaves, and produce berries and nesting areas for a wide variety of songbirds. **Viburnum** shrubs produce **berries** in a variety of colors, including neon pink, lemon yellow, robin egg blue and deep purple-black. The **viburnum berries** typically shift through a sequence of colors as they ripen, which creates a changing scene in the garden. One species is **Highbush cranberry** which is a medium-tall shrub typically with crowded, multiple stems, but does not form thickets. The fruit is berry-like, brilliant red in color with a single, strongly flattened stone. The wildlife value is that it provides a good source of food for a variety of wildlife. Twigs serve as a browse for deer. The fruit provides a winter food source for many bird species and mammals. Many birds prefer to eat the fruit after at least one freeze - thaw cycle, making the fruit softer and more palatable. This shrub also provides cover for birds and small mammals by forming a multi-stemmed bush.

Serviceberry: From flowers to fruits to nesting cover, the serviceberry offers small trees and shrubs that are among the most popular with wildlife habitat. There are many species, but it's hard to beat the tree-sized Downy Serviceberry for beauty and bird appeal. Serviceberries are deciduous and offer four-season interest with their beautiful blossoms, pome fruits, autumn leaf colors, and bark color in winter.

Muscatine County Extension Office

1601 Plaza Place
Muscatine, IA 52761
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.

 * **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 ad- *
 * dresses. These need to be current to keep you *
 * — our members — informed. *



Applications for the Search for Excellence award will be due on March 15, 2020.

Search for Excellence (SFE) is the recognition program of the Iowa Master Gardener program. SFE has seven categories:

- Youth/School Gardens
- Demonstration/Research Garden (applied scientific methodology)
- Workshop or Presentation
- Special Needs Audience (i.e. seniors, low-income families, people with disabilities, minority groups, incarcerated individuals, etc...)
- Mass Communications (i.e. newsletters, television, radio, social media, website, publications)

2019 Muscatine County Master Gardener Board

Board Members

Mary Danner (2019) Chair
 Heather Haroun (2020) Vice Chair
 Rachel Horner Brackett (2020)* Sec/Treas
 Kathy Haltmeyer (2020)
 Jane Hodge (2019)
 Ron Jensen (2019)*
 Ed Moreno (2020)
 Maryrose Peterschmidt (2020)

Gretchen Nollman (Intern)

() Year term expires as of Dec. 31
 * Going off Board Dec 31, 2019/2020 but eligible for re-election



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 pruit.lynn@gmail.com or call 563.260.0234

— Lynn Pruitt, Editor —