

GREEN PAGES

A newsletter for people interested in horticulture and natural resources in Western Wisconsin March 2015

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Gardening Fun Facts:

- Honey is the only food that includes all the substances necessary to sustain life, including water.
- Bees communicate with each other by dancing and by using pheromones (scents)
- Although considered a vegetable when cooking, squash is actually a fruit.

Winter is Good and so is Spring

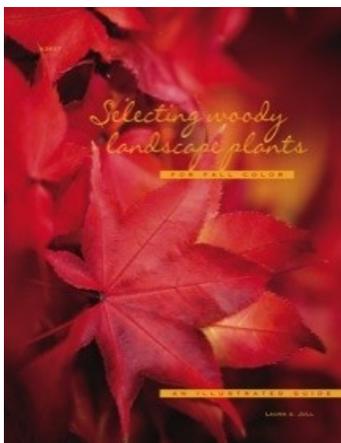
I appreciate the winter temperatures and the snow because I know it helps keep the majority of insect and disease populations lower. However I'm also ready for Spring to be here so I can smell soil, listen to rustling leaves, feel grass under my toes, and put seeds in the ground. I hope this edition of Green Pages gives you some garden planning enjoyment.

Erin LaFaive,

Horticulture Educator



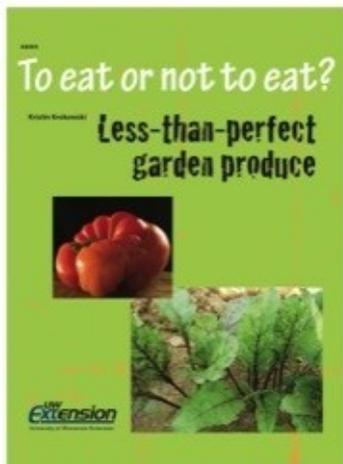
Here are a couple of new publications to hold you over until Spring. These are free as a download or available for purchase from the website.



Selecting Woody Landscape Plants for Fall Color: An Illustrated Guide

By Laura Jull

When selecting plants for landscaping, consider choosing ones that offer showy fall foliage. This beautifully illustrated 38-page publication provides an extensive (though by no means comprehensive) list of commercially available woody plants that offer spectacular fall color.



To eat or not to eat? Less-than-perfect-garden-produce

By Kristin Krokowski

Insects and disease can affect fruits and vegetables in the garden. Most damage poses no health risk. This series of fact sheets helps you answer the question: Is it safe to eat?

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Beaver Creek Reserve Events: Bee-keeping and Maple Syrup!



Saturday, March 7 | 9 am until 4 pm |
Wise Nature Center
\$40 for Members, \$45 for Nonmembers

Reap the tasty benefits of bee-keeping while pollinating your own garden!

This informative class teaches you the basics on how to get started making hives and taking care of nature's friend; the bee!

Learn beekeeping from a former professor who has wrangled many bees before.

Bring a sack lunch and wear a hat, long-sleeved shirt and long pants.
Registration and full payment required by Mar. 3

Visit <http://tinyurl.com/kcb9lqj> to register!

Sunday, March 29 | 1:30 until 2:30 pm or 2PM to 3PM | Wise Nature Center
\$5 for Member Adult, \$2 for Member Child, \$8 for Adult, \$3 for Child

Bring the family to explore the tradition of maple sugaring. Learn about which trees to tap, how to tap, and how the sap is boiled down to make that wonderful syrup.

Finish with a taste of fresh maple syrup over ice cream. Kids will have a chance to make their very own sumac or elderberry spile to take home!
To allow time for the tour and have your maple sundae, please arrive on time.

Registration and full payment required by Mar. 26.
Visit <http://tinyurl.com/lz9cbq5> for more

**“Life is the flower
for which love is
the honey.”
Victor Hugo**

Beekeeping within Limits

Earlier February, the members of the Eau Claire City Council met to discuss the possibility of Beekeeping within Eau Claire City Limits.

Twelve people spoke Monday the 9th about the law. Among them was Joshua Miller, a local bee-keeper who told the Council that he had sustained bees for three years in his backyard with the consent of his neighbors.

He went on to say he followed “Good beekeeping protocol” and made sure to share honey with his neighbors each year as well.

The law had received a large amount of support and passed unanimously when it went to vote Tuesday the 10th.

Although this opens the doors to everyone

interested in beekeeping, Vice Chairman of Eau Claire’s Advisory committee stated the amounts of applicants is predicted to be as few as 10 to 15 people.

Although some individuals fear bees, it is important to recognize their positive effect on the environment, as well as the delicious benefits of honey for consumption. It is also important to recognize that although wasps and flies may ruin a picnic, bees stick to plants, and are not considered an outdoor nuisance.

- In addition to safety rules a Beekeeper must follow, those interested in beekeeping under the new law must have meet following criteria.
- A fee of 145 dollars
 - Written consent from 80% of neighbors
 - A water source nearby



Planting Guide for Northern Wisconsin

Vegetable	PLANTING TIME		SEEDS OR PLANTS		SPACING		days to first harvest ^b	Estimated yield per foot of row ^c (pounds)
	Indoors	Outdoors	for 100 feet of row	seed depth (inches)	between rows (inches)	between plants (inches)		
Asparagus		April 29	50 crowns	6-8 ^d	36-40	18-24	1-2 years	1
Bean, bush lima		June 8	8 oz	1	24-30	3-4	70-80	0.30
Bean, bush snap		May 24	8 oz	1	18-24	2-3	50-60	0.50
Bean, pole snap		May 24	6 oz	1	30-36	3-4	60-65	0.70
Beet		April 29	1-1 1/4 oz	1/2	15-18	2-3	50-60	.50-1.50
Broccoli	March 29	May 14 (plants)	40-50 plants		24-36	18-24	60-70	0.80
Brussels sprouts		May 29 (seeds)	1/8 oz	1/2	24-30	12-18	90-100	1
Cabbage, early	March 29	May 14 (plants)	50-70 plants		18-24	12-18	60-70	2
Cabbage, late		May 29 (seeds)	1/8 oz	1/2	24-30	18-24	90-100	2.5
Carrot		April 29	1/4 oz	1/4	15-18	1-2	60-70	1-1.5
Cauliflower	March 29	May 14 (plants)	50-70 plants		24-30	12-18	50-60	0.80
Celeriac	March 29	June 3 (plants)	200-300 plants	1/8	24-36	4-6	110	1.10
Celery	March 29	June 3 (plants)	200 plants	1/8	30-36	4-6	100-110	2.00
Chard		April 29	1-1 1/4 oz	1/2	15-18	3-4	40-50	2
Chinese cabbage		July 4 (seeds)	1/8 oz	1/2	24-30	10-12	90-100	3
Collards		July 4 (seeds)	1/3 oz	1/2	24-36	12-24	60-85	1.90
Corn		May 10, June 8 ^e	100-150	1-1 1/2	30-36	8-10	65-90	1.50
Cucumber		June 14 (seeds)	1/3 oz	1	36-40	4-8	38-55	2-2.25
Eggplant	March 29	June 14 (plants)	50-60 plants		30-36	18-24	70-80	1.75
Endive		July 9	1 oz	1/4-1/2	18-24	8-10	90	0.50
Kale		July 9	1/3 oz	1/2	24-30	8-10	50-70	.75
Kohlrabi		April 29	8 oz	3/4	15-18	3-4	50-60	1.50
lettuce, head	March 29	May 14 (plants)	100 plants		15-18	8-10	60-70	0.50
lettuce, leaf		April 29	1/4 oz	1/4	15-18	2-3	40-50	.25
Muskmelon	May 29	June 3 (plants)	34-50 plants		36-40	24-36	80-90	2
Mustard		April 29	1/3 oz	1/4	18-24	2-3	40	0.50
Okra	April 29	June 14 (plants)	50-75 plants		42-60	8-24	50-60	0.60
Onion	February 29	May 14 (plants)	300-400		15-18	3-4	110-120	2
Onion, sets		April 29	3-4 lb	2	15-18	1-2	40-50	1
Parsley (plants)	March 14	May 14 (plants)	100 plants		18-24	6-8	30-40	.25
Parsnip		April 29	1/2 oz	1/2-3/4	24-30	2-3	100-120	1.50
Pea		April 29	1 lb	1	15-18	1-2	60-70	.25-.50
Pepper	April 14	June 14 (plants)	50-60 plants		30-36	18-24	60-70	2
Potato, early		April 29	12-15 lb	3-4	30-36	12-15	80-100	1.50
Potato, midseason		April 29	12-15 lb	3-4	30-36	12-15	100-120	2
Potato, late		April 29	12-15 lb	3-4	30-36	12-15	120-140	2.50
Pumpkin	May 14	June 3 (plants) May 24 (seeds)	34-50 plants 1/2 oz	1-1 1/2	48-60 48-60	24-36 24-36	90-110 90-110	2 2
Radish		April 29	1 oz	1/2-3/4	15-18	1-2	25-30	0.50
Rhubarb		April 29	35 crowns	3-4	48-54	36	1 year	2
Rutabaga		June 29	1/8 oz	3/4	24-30	6-8	100-110	3
Salsify		April 29	1/2 oz	1/2	18	2-3	120	.75
Spinach		April 29	1 oz	1/2-3/4	15-18	1-2	40-50	1
Squash, summer		June 3	1/2 oz	1-1 1/2	48-60	24-36	50-60	2
Squash, fall	May 14	June 3 (plants)	34-50 plants	1-1 1/2	72-84	24-36	90-120	2
Tomato	April 29	June 3 (plants)	34-60 plants		36-42	18-36	65-80	2-4
Turnip		April 29	1/4 oz	1/2-3/4	18-24	2-3	60-70	2
Watermelon		June 3	1/2 oz	1	96	96	75-90	2.00

^b Cultivars vary greatly in time need to reach harvest stage; extend the harvest season by planting cultivars of different maturity dates or by making successive plantings of the same cultivar. ^c Estimated yields under less than ideal growing conditions; actual yields will vary widely with weather, soil fertility, and cultural practices. ^d Two inches of soil covering at planting. Gradually fill trench 6-8 inches with soil as plants grow. ^e May 25 for sugary enhancers and supersweets.

From publication A1653 "Vegetable cultivars and planting guide for Wisconsin gardens-2008" by A.J. Bussan, Judy Reith-Rozelle, and Karen Delahaut. UW Coop Extension.

March Gardening Tips: Courtesy of: Sharon Morrissey, Consumer Horticulture Agent, University of Wisconsin-Extension

First Week

- Take bulbs out of cold storage for forcing as soon as they have had a long enough cold period. The smaller bulbs like hyacinth and crocus only need 8 weeks of cold while tulips and daffodils need 12 - 14. Paper white narcissus do not require this chilling so can still be purchased and potted up to grow and bloom yet this spring. 
- Tender bulbs of tuberous begonias, caladiums, dahlias, and canna lilies can be potted up in well-drained soil rich in organic matter. Discard any that have rotted in storage. 
- If you have been storing geraniums in cool, dark conditions, its time to pot them up, cut them back and start watering again.
- Cut back geraniums and coleus that you have kept growing indoors through the winter to only a few buds. This will stimulate new growth and a fuller plant by the time summer arrives.
- The longer days and shorter nights now will stimulate houseplants to grow more rapidly again so you may resume fertilizing. Use fertilizers at only half-strength and only every other watering. If March is cloudy plants will still use less water and therefore less fertilizer.
- Continue feeding your holiday plants like Christmas and Thanksgiving cacti, poinsettias, cyclamen, azalea and amaryllis. After flowering they start actively growing again and therefore need more nutrients. 

Second Week

- The end of the dormant season is the best time to prune almost all trees and shrubs. Pines are about the only exception. Let their new growth expand until young needles are half of full size before pruning. 
- Spring flowering shrubs can be pruned now, too, unless you can't stand losing the flower buds on the stems you are removing.
- Branches cut from spring flowering shrubs and fruit trees can be brought in and put in warm water to force them into bloom.
- Do not use tree wound dressing or paint on pruning cuts. These can actually slow the healing process.
- Elm, maple, birch, and black walnut ooze sap when pruned in the spring due to water pressure from the moist soil. It will not harm the plant but you can prune these in early summer or late fall instead if you are bothered by it.
- Some insect pests of trees and shrubs are best controlled by spraying with dormant oil. This includes scale insects of pine, lilac, and euonymus and many of the gall-forming insects. These insects reside on stems or needles and are smothered by the oil. Galls are mostly a cosmetic problem but scales can weaken plants. Check weather forecasts to be sure temperatures will stay above freezing for 8 - 12 hours after spraying to avoid damaging stems and needles. 
- Prune out and burn or bury the brown, shriveled "witches-brooms" on honeysuckle. The leaf-folding

Gardening Tips: Continued

aphid that causes these overwinters in these growths. They feed on new growth as soon as the buds break in the spring. This one is hard to control since untreated honeysuckles are everywhere. This may be a good time to consider replacing honeysuckles with less invasive plants with fewer pest problems.



Third Week

- Make St. Patrick's Day a floral holiday with shamrocks and other assorted foliage plants. Kids get a kick out of making their own "Irish" carnations by using white carnations and a vase of green food coloring and water. At the same time they learn that plants suck water up and move it through the whole plant.
- Start planning the vegetable garden. Be sure to include your children or grandchildren in the process this year.
- Seeds of the following annual flowers can be started indoors: ageratum, wax begonia, browallia, dianthus and carnation, dusty miller, impatiens, larkspur, lobelia, dwarf marigold, nierembergia, pansy, petunia, moss rose, snapdragons, and stocks. Be sure to use a sterile seed starting medium, supplemental lighting, and bottom heat for best results. Different species also have different requirements for light or darkness during



germination. Look up the varieties you have on the seed packet, in a seed catalog or a good reference book.

- Tops of onions seeded last month should be clipped to keep them at about 4 inches. This diverts energy to bulb growth.



Fourth Week

- Sow seeds indoors for the following vegetables: broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, eggplant, and head lettuce. Sow seeds indoors for the following flowers: alyssum, verbena, calendula, celosia, coleus, dahlia, phlox, and salvia.
- Be mindful of warm days when the sun can cause heat to build-up under rose cones, cold frames, and in other plant protection systems. However, avoid removing mulches prematurely from plants with tender new tissue forming.
- Examine lawn areas where water may have pooled or snow cover lingered. Snow mold fungus may develop in these areas. Also look for meadow mouse tunnels in the browned grass. Both can be improved by roughing up the affected area with a rake to encourage the adjacent healthy grass plants to fill in.
- Take your lawnmower in for servicing to avoid the rush at the repair shop on that first nice weekend of April. Get it tuned up, the oil changed, and tighten all bolts. At the very least, get the blade sharpened.



THINK SPRING!

Green Pages

Starting Seeds Indoors: by Erin LaFaive



Flats of seedlings

“Happiness held is the seed;

Happiness shared is the flower.”

John Harrigan



Seedlings emerging

Do you want to get ahead of the growing season? Do you want to plant vegetables need a longer growing season? Do you want to grow a plant that you can't find in the stores? Then start your own seeds indoors.

Many plants do better if started indoors because they may need a jump start on the growing season since the northern Wisconsin season is shorter than they may need. And some seeds have a difficult time germinating in the early season of Wisconsin's weather. Tomatoes and peppers are a great example of plants that need longer growing seasons than northern Wisconsin can provide.

Containers

Any type of container can be used to start seeds as long as it is sterilized before planting and has drainage holes at the bottom. To sterilize pots, soak the containers in a 10% bleach mixture and thoroughly rinse. Single celled pots are sold in stores and generally only a seed or two are planted in one cell. Mass-sowing seeds are done in flats that do not have dividers which require transplanting after the seedling is bigger.

Soil

Use a seed starting mix or other soil-less indoor plant mixture. These types of soils have been sterilized and contain smaller particles that the embryos have an easier time pushing through. In addition, they are light weight and drain well. If you want to create your own mixture use a pasteurized mixture of equal amounts of soil; sand, vermiculite or perlite; and peat moss.

Planting

Moisten the soil before you add it to the containers. It shouldn't be soggy. The general rule for planting depth is 4 times the thickness of the seed. Also, check the seed packet for recommendations. Some seeds are very small and hard to see. In those cases mixing the seed in sterile sand can help you see where you are spreading the seed. Very small seeds are simply sprinkled over the top of the soil. To cover seeds use vermiculite or a layer of screened potting mix you are already using over the seeds. Leave about a ¼ of an inch from the top of the container to allow enough room for the vermiculite.

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Starting Seeds: Cont.

Germination

Cover the planted seeds with plastic leaving an inch to inch and a half gap. The plastic helps to keep the soil from drying out and traps some heat. A heating source underneath the seeds will speed up germination. Place them in a window with moderate light but not in direct sunlight. The temperatures should be 55 to 60 degrees F at night and 65 to 70 degrees F during the day.



Seedlings emerging

Watering

Keep the soil moist but be careful not to overwater. Using a spray bottle works great for tiny seeds because a strong stream of water may move the seeds around too much. Even a stream being poured from a glass of water can be too strong. Watch for the growth of mold which generally it looks like white fuzz on the soil surface. If you see that growing take off the plastic. When the first seedlings appear take off the plastic. This is also the time they need stronger light so they require a south facing window or artificial lights.

My plants are lopsided! My plants are spindly! This can be prevented by turning the container as the seedlings grow and by giving enough light.

Fluorescent lights are another source of lighting. They need 16-18 hours of light. One warm-white, 40-watt bulb and one cool-white, 40-watt bulb used together are adequate for seed starting and seedling growth. You can also use fluorescent lights or grow lights.

Gradually acquaint the seedlings to outside by first starting with an hour and working up. The seedlings are not use to fluctuating temperatures, wind, and the sun.

These are general indoor seed germinating rules. By reading the seed package you will likely find more detailed information on seed depth, germination time, and any other specialized requirements.



***“From a small seed
a mighty trunk
may grow.”***

Aeschylus



Make and Take Workshop—Chimes

Tuesday, March 17th | UW-Extension Office in Altoona | 6:30PM

Nancy Spak, Master Gardener and owner of Azure Glass Studio will be doing a "hands on" workshop on stained glass wind chimes at 6:30 p.m. This is a chance to build your own wind chimes using stained glass and beads. The cost for the workshop is \$21. Class size is limited to 30 people so reserve a spot by contacting the UW-Extension Office at **715-839-4712**.



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Edible Landscaping with Heirlooms

**“It will never rain
roses: when we
want to have more
roses we must
plant more trees.”
George Eliot**

Thursday, March 12
1–2 p.m. and repeated 6–7 p.m.
Eau Claire Room

L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library
400 Eau Claire Street, Eau Claire



**Co-sponsored by Eau Claire Garden Club.
Free. No registration required.**

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