



# Calumet County Master Gardener Association Newsletter Fall 2007

October, 2007						
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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### SEPTEMBER 2008

- 22 Champion Tree Workshop, free, 10:00 am to Noon, Courthouse. Please sign up with Ron Richter [rrichter@tds.net](mailto:rrichter@tds.net) or call, phone number is on your membership list
- 25 Apple Tasting Event, 6:30-8:00 pm, \$2.00, UWEX, 1150 Bellevue St., Green Bay, must pre-register with Debi (920) 465-8512
- 29 Habitat for Woodland Birds, free, 9:00-11:00 am, Brillion Nature Center

### OCTOBER 2007

- 3 CCMG Board of Directors Meeting, 7:00 pm, Courthouse
- 5-6 WIMGA Conference, Eau Claire, see State newsletter or website for more details
- 6 Spring Flowering Bulbs, Green Bay, see WIMGA webpage of events
- 12-13 N.E.W. MG's Fall Fest, free, Fri., Noon to 6:00 pm and Sat., 9:00 - 2:00 pm., 1150 Bellevue, Green Bay
- 13 Invasive Species Hike, 1:00-2:00 pm, Brillion Nature Center
- 13-14 African Violet Show and Sale, Madison, call (608) 833-5552 for location & more information
- 17 CCMG Membership Meeting, 7:00 pm, Courthouse, Program: Insects of Wisconsin
- 18 Bottomland & Swamp Hardwoods, free, 6:30-8:00 pm, Brillion Nature Center
- 25 Apple Tasting, 6:30-8:00 pm, \$2.00, UWEX, 1150 Bellevue Ave., Green Bay, must pre-register by calling Debi at (920) 465-8512
- 26 Small Deciduous Trees, Brown Bag Lunch Program, noon-1:00 pm, Courthouse, call Connie at 849-1450 x5 to attend

### NOVEMBER 2007

- 7 Board of Directors Meeting, 7:00pm, Courthouse
- 10 Herb Fair, Madison, call (608) 262-1664 for location and more information
- 21 CCMG Membership Meeting, 7:00 pm, Courthouse
- 30 Extending Seasonal Raspberry Harvest, Brown Bag Lunch Program, noon-1:00pm, Courthouse, call Connie at 849-1450 x5 to attend

### DECEMBER 2007

- 5 Board of Directors Meeting, 7:00pm, Courthouse
- 14 Growing Cole Crops, Brown Bag Lunch Program, Courthouse, contact Connie at 849-1450 x5, to attend
- 19 CCMG Membership Christmas Exchange - White Elephant gifts - horticulture related

### JANUARY 2008

- 2 Board of Directors Meeting, 7:00pm, Courthouse
- 16 Mid-Am Horticultural Trade Show, Chicago
- 16 CCMG Membership Meeting. 7:00pm, Courthouse

## WISCONSIN MASTER GARDENERS TO HOST ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN EAU CLAIRE

"Back to our Roots" is the theme for the Wisconsin Master Gardener's 2007 Annual Conference that will be held October 5-6 in Eau Claire.

Anyone with an interest in gardening is invited to attend and participate in the networking, learning and exchange of ideas.

Keynote speaker on Friday evening will be Susan Davis Price, author of "Growing Home, Stories of Ethnic Gardening," a compilation of stories on why and what people plant in their gardens.

On Saturday, the conference will feature breakout sessions on a variety of gardening topics ranging from organic gardening, vines, perennials & shrubs, to edible landscaping, orchids, native plants, and evening gardens. Other notable speakers will be Cathy Barash, Rob Bursick (Dragonfly Gardens), Mark Dwyer (director-Rotary Gardens), Mike Heger (Ambergate Gardens), Rory Nelson Klick (Community Gardens), Dave Wanninger (Beaver Creek Nursery), and Tom Martell (Martell Vineyards), plus others. Many will be amongst the numerous vendors as well, and will have a good bit of material to select from.

The Wisconsin Master Gardener's "Back to our Roots" conference will be held at the Plaza Hotel & Suites, 1202 W. Clairemont Avenue in Eau Claire.

Conference registration fee is \$20 for Friday evening and \$50 for Saturday. Pre-registration is needed by September 30.

For complete conference and registration information, visit [www.hort.wisc.edu/mastergardener/conference/conf07.htm](http://www.hort.wisc.edu/mastergardener/conference/conf07.htm) or contact conference chair Rolf Utegaard at (715) 834-0065.

## A HUGE THANK YOU TO ALL

Both Byron Hacker and I, Ron Richter, want to thank all members that helped clerk, place stickers, measure corn, sunflowers, and heads of sunflowers, weigh and measure carrots, weigh other veggies, sweep the floor, help with clean-up, make flower arrangements, brought flowers to the fair for our display, and other things as well. We "**thank you all**" plus, we also want to thank Duaine Stillman for helping to clean up the building on Monday night, it was all greatly appreciated.

## VOLUNTEER TIME IS DUE

Hopefully everyone has remembered the cut-off of September 19th. If not, please get your hours to Hertha immediately, as they must be to Susan Mahr by October 1st. Hertha needs to compile all figures, **so please make an effort to have them in.**

## ANOTHER THANK YOU IS IN ORDER

Your organization wants to also "**thank**" all of the members who helped by sitting in our booth and answering numerous questions from black spots on maple leaves to Japanese beetles in rose flowers, from anthracnose and leaf scorch in maples, to early drop of leaves in birch trees.

We also had a display on both native and alien phragmites. Again, we want to "**thank**" Martin and Carroll Rudy for securing the specimens and for Carroll making up the signage. Many people looked at the examples and asked questions about them, so thanks Carroll, it was greatly appreciated.

## 2007 COUNTY FAIR UPDATE

We also had our display on Purple Loosestrife, along with an added bonus which many a child or youngster found to be enlightening. We had a caterpillar which was eating the plant. I even had a young girl of about 5-6 years old wanted to hold the caterpillar and pet it.

We also had a large Atlantic Giant pumpkin that weighed in at 300 lbs. from an Open Class exhibitor, this pumpkin was of great interest to many small children, who sat on the corner and had their parents take pictures. Even the Fairest of the Fair, Katie Klessig, and the Wisconsin State Fairest of the Fairs, Sheri Nelson, had their picture taken with the large squash pumpkin. So, it was a popular item!

We again had a flower display that received a blue ribbon as well, by the time the fair was over several flowers had served their purpose and had now given up the ship and dropped.

All in all, it went quite well. Most were pleased with what they received, 4-H crops and veggies were down and Open Class was way up, which was good as it filled the gaps.

I also spoke with three potential new members, and Byron also had one, so hopefully we will see four new members or more joining us. **Which is great!**

We hope that all members that sat the booth during the fair enjoyed their time there. Lots of people stopped to ask questions on this, that, and everything in the middle. I, for one, had a great time!

## PRACTICAL HERBOLGY 101

September 29-30, 2007  
Radisson Hotel & Conference Center  
2040 Airport Drive  
Green Bay, WI 54313

Explore the ROOTS (and leaves and flowers) of Natural Health.

Before the age of computers, herbalists were able to find plants growing in the wild and process them by hand for an effective remedy. For all the advances in technology and protocols, the essence of natural healing still lies in the effects of untainted plants on the human body. But the herbalist of today has little knowledge of identifying or making remedies by hand if necessary. Practical Herbology is designed to guide the student who wants to learn even more details about the most beneficial life-changing herbs in a way that allows them to reap the benefits of herbs in any situation.

Highlights of the Practical Herbology 101 Capstone:

- A brief history of the growth of Natural Medicine in the West
- Using herb guides and reliable sources to eliminate intimidation of actual plants
- Tips on identifying, growing, harvesting, wild-crafting, and preserving healing plants so you will never go without their benefit
- Making and using basic remedies - tinctures, extracts, salves, fomentations, infusions, ointments, and poultices.
- Touch, taste, and smell - thinking "outside the capsule" with easily grown or commonly found herbs that are powerhouses of natural healing
- Selecting the right remedy - a comprehensive guide to scores of common maladies, with appropriate preparations, dosages, and formulas

This course is intended to EMPOWER and REASSURE the experienced herb user and novice alike with a deeper understanding of how herbs work and when to use them. Whatever your preferred source for encapsulated, processed herbs may be, recent events have shown us that the forces of nature, terrorist attacks, and government intervention can suddenly and certainly prevent access to your favorite remedies. This information will give you the tools to know how to protect yourself, care for your family, and serve your community if other sources are no longer available. There is no substitute for the KNOWLEDGE of making good medicine from nature's own apothecary and that knowledge can never be taken away.

PH 101 and 102 each cover 23 different herbs that are commonly found, easily grown, and highly beneficial. Discover the great diversity of options and gain a clear and detailed blueprint to restore and maintain good health by using some of the simple, herbs of the field to enhance the healing of the body.

Practical Herbology 101 is not required before 102. Because there are so many great herbs, it takes two classes to cover them. Each class covers 23 herbs and a different aspect of herbology.

Register by September 8, 2007 for the early bird rate of \$175. Call 800-321-1005 or visit <https://www.kconline.com/cnhp.org/cgi-bin/registration.php>

If you register three brand new people at the same time that you register, you can attend this seminar for free. (4 for the price of 3.)

## MANITOWOC COUNTY MG FALL SEMINAR

The Master Gardeners of Manitowoc County are hosting a Fall Seminar at the Manitowoc County UW-Extension Office, 4319 Expo Drive, in Manitowoc. The seminar will be held on Saturday, October 6, with registration beginning at 8:30 am. The agenda for the seminar follows:

8:30 am - Registration (donuts and coffee)

9:00 a.m. - **"New Vegetables"** - Jim Nienhuis, Horticulture Professor at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, will explore "What are the plants and tissues that modern folks are now slicing and dicing into veggies?"

10:30 am - **"Seed to Salad"** - Culinary Herbalist Linda Goodine of **Herbs 'N Such** will discuss the companion planting, growing techniques, harvesting, drying, freezing, canning and usage of the 15 most popular culinary herbs: basil, chives, cilantro, dill, fennel, French tarragon, Italian flat leaf parsley, lemon balm, marjoram, mints, oregano, rosemary, sage, summer savory, and the thymes. Each of these herbs will be used in the preparation of a variety of samples shared at the conclusion of the "Seed to Salad" presentation.

Cost for the seminar is \$5.00 per person with proceeds to be donated to a local environmental organization.

Pre-registration is required as seating is limited. Please make your reservation by Friday, September 28<sup>th</sup> by sending registration information and check, payable to Manitowoc Master Gardeners, to Judy Tisler, 13518 San Road, Cato, WI 54230. Call Judy at 732-3258 for registration information see complete details at <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/manitowoc/documents/07FallSeminar.pdf>

## FALL IS FAST APPROACHING

As the temperatures become more fall like, we always think of apples and Halloween with carved pumpkins, and harvesting all of the pie pumpkins, watermelons, and squash. Then put everything to bed for yet another winter.

But for now, my topic is apples.

Apples are the quintessential all-American fruit. Who could resist a fall apple pie or the crisp sweet/tart flavor of a freshly picked apple?

While the apple trees I remember growing on our farm were nearly 20 feet tall and we needed ladders to harvest, modern apple varieties are perfectly sized for small edible landscapes. Many varieties are dwarfs, which grow less than 10 feet tall.

So when thinking about adding another tree to your landscape, consider a dwarf fruit tree instead. You will have the best of two worlds, shade and fruit.

## UPDATE ON PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE

This year was a year like no others that we have experienced. First off, someone removed approximately 125 plants for us, along with the wire markers that identified them along Highway 10. So Louie from Brillion Nature Center and two others from that organization dug plants in Valders. Then, Naomi and Linda Waddell, Shawn McNeil, Linda and I planted 89 pots of loosestrife the following day for the tent project at the Brillion Nature Center. After that feat, Linda and I delivered plants to several of you to raise.

Approximately a month later, the excitement began when BNC placed beetles into the tent at the Nature Center two weeks earlier than anyone else. So, we quickly changed course and instead of members releasing their beetles and plants, we brought them over time to the BNC to become transporters. But, due to the sheer numbers of beetles in the tent at any given time, we changed our minds and started collecting beetles and placing them directly into areas that needed them. This worked out well, no carrying pots looking for higher ground, no rolling down right-of-way ditches (another true story - but at some other time). It is the only way to go, per Linda and me, and that is releasing beetles directly to where they are needed.

So as time went on, places that had plants last year didn't have plants this spring. We watched very closely. And, as of today, we are very happy to say that only two small patches have sprung up, and that one area which was approximately an acre in size is down to a handful of plants trying to recover. Plus, a few other isolated spots, must have been cut and sprayed.

As of August first, to our knowledge every site that contained over twenty-five plants in Calumet County had beetles on it. So, here we are with several more thousand beetles. So, we started to search out other counties that needed help in controlling the purple loosestrife.

It became a win-win proposition for all, Linda and I (Ron), placed beetles in six counties, and we, as a team, gave 70 pots of larva and some beetles to Kohler Andrae State Park in Sheboygan County. Twenty-four thousand beetles went to Thousand Island Nature Conservancy in Kaukauna, and others went as follows: Brown, Door, Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, and Winnebago.

In Calumet County, we placed 23,000 beetles not including the 10,000 from CCMG members, and the 3,000 from Dylan Schnese, a scout from Appleton working on an Eagle Award, which gave us 36,000 into Calumet County.

In Brown, we placed approximately 4,000 beetles.

Outagamie, Thousand Island Nature Conservancy received 24,000 beetles.

Shawano, received 5,000 for use on the Southwest corner of Shawano Lake and another 5,000 were placed on the north edge of Washington Lake in Shawano County.

Sheboygan, Kohler Andrae State Park received approximately 70 pots near and close to the entrance of the park, estimated beetles were 14,000, figuring 200 per pot of larva. Plus, a few extra beetles to boot!

Waupaca, in areas known as the Lebanon Swamp, we placed 27,000 and in the New London swamp was placed another 19,000. Just east of Royalton on Hwy. 54, we placed an additional 18,000 into various areas along the Highway 54 right of way.

Winnebago, near the Calumet County line, we placed 9,500 in various places, some along Hwy. 441N on the south side of the highway, while others just west of Firelane 1 in Calumet County.

We covered 1,826 miles in releases and searches for additional sites, of which some we found.

Louie and Linda also took a canoe and went up the north ditch and the 1/4 mile south ditch looking for plants in the Brillion Marsh, and in some places even placed beetles or plants into small areas.

We want to thank the following people: Jennifer "Louie" Kolberg and her volunteers at the Brillion Nature Center; Linda Richter; Cynthia Hakkert; Naomi and Linda Waddell; Shawn McNeil; Laurie and Mike Pichee; Carroll and Martin Rudy; Dylan Schnese; Jeannette Sabel; and Donna and Elmer Hanke. It was with all of your help that this project for 2007 produced 161,500 beetles. We received several verbal thank yous, and a letter from Thousand Island thanking our organization for helping to control PL at their Conservancy. Plus, Richard Nikolai, DNR Territory Manager of Habitat, and Brock Woods, DNR Invasive Species Coordinator, also sent emails expressing thanks to our organization and its team.

So again, "**thanks**" to all who helped to make our environment a better place. We will be doing another tent in the spring of 2008 with the Brillion Nature Center Volunteers, and are currently working on securing additional funding for the project.

So, if anyone else would like to join the cause, please contact Ron Richter or Laurie Pichee, joint co-chairs of this project.

## BIG TREE WORKSHOP - SEPT. 22

On Saturday, September 22, from 10:00 am 'til noon, at the Courthouse in Chilton, Ian Brown from the Department of Natural Resources will be here to present a workshop on how to measure the circumference of a tree, how to use a hypsometer (this instrument measures the height of a tree) and the use of a GPS unit. He will touch only briefly on the topic of recording big trees in our County.

It is our hope that we can find enough people to help us establish a Champion Tree Book for Calumet County in the future. This book would be an asset to have, as its fun to know where all of these trees are located and how big they actually are.

So if interested, please come to this two hour workshop.

## MOVING INTO A NEW ERA

At our last agenda meeting our advisor Mary Kohrell presented the Board of Directors with a plan to modernize our website on the County webpage. If any of you have taken a look at the present site which is at [www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/calumet](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/calumet), click on master gardeners link part way down the page or horticulture to the left-side, you will only find a generic calendar and our past newsletters.

Mary had examples from several organizations around us, so that all could see what other groups are doing.

On the plus side, it will give us better exposure to the public, plus who knows, maybe one day in the future we can also record our volunteer hours online like many others already do. Also, when people look up the county page, they will also have a link right to our website as well. It's a win-win proposition and once established, everyone can see the major benefits this site will provide.

When people click into the new site, they will find information on:

- What is a Master Gardener
- How can they apply to become Master Gardener
- Community and county projects are we involved in
- What classes or events are coming up with details on dates, times, etc.
- Who to contact for more information
- Plus, whatever else members feel should be on our Webpages

Also, down the road, Extension is looking at establishing a mailbox where people can send emails with questions and digital photos of what there problem is and one or more of our Master Gardeners, can come in and answer those questions on a weekly basis.

This is the wave of the future. I (Ron) have been answering hort questions via email for over two years already, with several people from Calumet and Brown County. It is so much easier than calling or stopping by, as I can answer questions at midnight or 4:00 am. By this method, the person that answers the email, can at times also send a link or photo of what the problem was. Homeowners with problems like to read up on what took place and how to correct and stay out of trouble. So it too, will be a win-win deal down the road.

## OTHER PESTS IN THE AREA

In Door County, the hemlock looper has been defoliating northern white cedar in some stands while missing others. In Shawano County, the Solitary pine sawfly was found feeding on red pine. Over in Manitowoc County, the Oak Slug Sawfly was seen defoliating an oak. In Kewaunee County, they are having problems with pine spittlebugs. And, in Brown County, they have Boxelder bugs, Japanese beetles, and Earwigs just to name a few, very similar to what we have.

In the days ahead we could again see Brown fruit chafers, they are chunky, mottled brown beetles feeding on rotting fruit and nectar. So keep up with your IPM programs in your landscapes.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN CALUMET COUNTY?

We have been out and about with lots of homeowner problems in their landscapes. Everything from fluxing oaks, to bacterial wetwood in a mulberry tree and in a maple. Gypsy moths to rose slugs to earwigs to hickory gall mites. Bark beetles destroying Austrian pine to major leaf scorch of maples and oaks.

This year, we have seen more root girdling than any other year. We think part of the reason people are seeing more and more problems with the crowns of their trees is because of the lack of moisture. Trees are really stressed this year, and with crowns thinning, or quarter to half canopies dying. More and more homeowners are beginning to ask "WHY?" Up to this point people just haven't taken a real good look-see of their surroundings. Most of these trees fall into that 15 to 25 year category.

Also, a few weeks back was the first nectria canker that I ever saw in a basswood, the Appleton City Forester confirmed my findings. Normally you see this condition in mountain ash, or in the prunus family. So it was a surprise!

We have gotten calls on my ash has that borer, to my cucumbers are wilting is it a blight?...9 times out of 10, it's lack of moisture as to the wilting. This one home has a large garden, and they water once a week heavy, once a week doesn't work.

As to the emerald ash borer threat, we are glad to see people are listening to reports of this borer getting closer and closer to Wisconsin. So, we would much rather have people call in, then to have them sit back and let them in without saying a word. As then, it would be to late to put up a front.

In the upcoming weeks, potato leafhopper populations should slow down and decline.

The sweet corn earworms will continue to take flight, although the season for corn is coming to an end.

Presently the Western bean cutworm larvae are active.

Cabbage Looper Moth counts were low again this week. So far this season, the threat for damage from cabbage looper larvae has been low near trapping locations. In 2005, peak flight occurred during the week of August 11-18. The cabbage looper migration window is open through late September.

In evergreens, we are seeing spruce needledrop, white pine tip weevil and spruce needle rust on Colorado blue spruce, eastern spruce gall adelgid, and rhizosphaera needlecast.

The viburnum leaf beetle is also leaving its mark on many shrubs.

This is the majority of what we are seeing, maybe you have seen or received calls on other problems as well. Integrated Pest Management is the key to success in your landscapes, so stay on top of things to be safe.

## EMERALD ASH BORER SURVEY AND DETECTION

**Emerald ash borer - (Large purple sticky traps) -** currently being researched as the most promising replacement for peeling living ash trees - were set in dozens of Wisconsin trees for the summer period coinciding with any emerald ash borer flight, if the beetle were present in Wisconsin. A coordinated effort by DNR, DATCP and cooperating municipalities resulted in 165 of the corrugated plastic traps being placed at highway rest areas, state parks, county parks and a private landfill. Trap setting began the week of June 20, and removal began the week of August 6. Although the traps caught a wide variety of insects, no emerald ash borer beetles were detected during bi-weekly on-site trap checks. Following removal, traps will be examined carefully in the laboratory to assure that no hidden emerald ash borers are stuck in the glue.

Feedback on the trapping program will be shared with USDA researchers engaged in developing the traps. Improvements in trap design, use and lure may someday provide a less expensive and more efficient emerald ash borer detection tool. -- *Adrian Barta*

## ADDED BONUS TO PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE PROJECT

How could I forget telling everyone of the find that we got from a plant located by Elmer & Donna Hanke's home. One of the purple loosestrife plants that they were rearing contained "**Virginian Tiger Moth**" caterpillars.

Martin Rudy picked up the pots of plants and brought them to the Brillion Nature Center. He showed us the pot with all of the caterpillars, mind you the plant was stripped bare of all foliage. So, we gave Martin another bushy plant, so they he could continue to feed them and hope they would be able to do their thing. And, that was to transfer into beautiful white tiger moths.

You can go to this link below to learn more about the added bonus.  
<http://mothphotographersgroup.msstate.edu/Files/Live/Species/8000/8137.shtml>

## GARDEN CLEAN-UP

Take time this fall for gardening tasks that will help prevent disease problems next spring and summer. Most fungal leaf pathogens overwinter in leaf litter, so removing dead leaves can eliminate an important source of fungal spores during the following growing season. Rake tree leaves. Cut back and remove diseased herbaceous plant debris after the top has been killed by frost. Recycle the organic waste by composting.

**Pruning** = Proper pruning of trees and shrubs allows for better air flow through the plant, which can be important in preventing foliar diseases. Fall and winter are good times to do this, as pathogens are less active during colder weather.

**Watering** = Regularly water trees and shrubs, especially evergreens, to prevent winter drying and browning.

## SPIDER MITES

**This article taken from the Wisconsin Pest Bulletin, Volume 52, Number 19, August 17, 2007**

Inspections of state nurseries this summer found this pest on nursery stock in every county. Many species of spider mites occur in Wisconsin. Two of the more common and damaging species are the two-spotted spider mite (*Tetranychus urticae*) and the spruce spider mite (*Oligonychus ununguis*).

Deciduous trees and shrubs, conifers, ornamental plants, agricultural crops and houseplants may be colonized by spider mites. Affected foliage initially has a speckled or stippled appearance, later having a reddish or bronze cast and dull look, with webbing apparent and eventual desiccation and death occurring.

The two-spotted spider mite becomes active in April and May. Individual females lay eggs for several weeks, producing hundreds of eggs in their lifetime. Development from egg to adult is completed in as few 5 days or as many as 20 days, depending on weather conditions. The climatic conditions favorable to two-spotted spider mite population increases are low moisture (rainfall and relative humidity) and prolonged high temperatures. Outbreaks of this pest are associated with drought conditions.

The spruce spider mite becomes active somewhat earlier in the season, in March and April. Development is completed in three to four weeks. In contrast to the two-spotted spider mites, this species thrives under cool conditions and becomes dormant at temperatures above 90F for prolonged periods. The spruce spider mite resumes activity in the fall when cooler temperatures prevail.

A number of options are available for control of spider mites, including dormant horticultural spray oils, registered miticides, introducing predacious mites, and dislodging mites using a forceful spray of water. Mite populations should be monitor closely prior to applying control measures and repeat applications may be needed if heavy populations persist. Timing of control is critical since some of these products are applied in spring to kill mites hatching from eggs and others in to reduce populations in fall. Heavy rainfall may temporarily reduce mite populations.

## CAN WE HURT MYCORRHIZAL FUNGI?

This subject came up after an article that was in the Wisconsin State Farmer and also presented at a workshop in Hilbert. Many people became confused as to whether to apply additional fungi to their soils or leave their soil be! What people didn't realize is that these fungi are present at all times in the soil. That is to say if the soil is in optimum health. Several people were lead to believe they needed additional, which wasn't the case at all.

So, I will attempt to explain how a "Little dab may do, but a large dab could be harmful."

The basic recommendation is to avoid using synthetic fertilizers when using biological growing methods. This is especially true when using fast acting immediate acting liquid fertilizers. The non-organic fertilizer or plant food disrupts the normal biological activity that feeds the plant and protects its root system to some extent.

Repeated applications of chemical fertilizers will kill off the organisms (including mycorrhizal fungi) in the soil. Thus, leaving you with a soil that now must rely solely on people to continue to feed with this type of fertilizer.

Regardless of what chemical companies tell you, plants need lots of additional trace and minor minerals to reach their full potential. Using types like 10-10-10 just doesn't cut it, and never has. But, the companies preach that using the balanced or complete regiment of these blends will cure all of your growing problems. That is **why the use of soil testing is so important in your landscapes or gardens, etc.** As that test will show you where the soil is weak and will give recommendations as to how to bring it up the optimum health that it can be.

When I studied soils some years ago, Sherry Combs, from the University of Wisconsin in Madison, kept coming back to plants needing nutrients, the trace elements for optimum growth and health of plants. That was where I first learned about all of the mycorrhizal fungi that are present in our soils.

Some years back, a professor from an Illinois University, speaking at the Wisconsin Natural Foods Association Annual meeting, also talked of how the mycorrhizal fungi needed to be present in organic soil and of the down-falls of using chemical fertilizers year in and year out. He also believed strongly in having night-crawlers and normal angle worms and red worms in the soil. As they tunnel in the soil and this allows rain-water to go down faster to the plants roots. Plus, the worms with their tunneling adds oxygen to the soil.

Also, some where I also read where a USDA Horticulture scientist practicing mycology, did an experiment using a slow release fertilizer like Osmocote. He didn't see any damage to mycorrhizal fungi, when he only used half of the normal dosage. But, he also had said, "That stronger dosages were very harmful to the soil and the fungi."

Plus, we all must remember that not all trace minerals or nutrients are in fertilizers such as 10-10-10.

Once you try to rebuild your soil, after using chemical fertilizers for years and years, it won't happen over night and it will take lots of time to establish a healthy micro-organism community or populations of these organism back into your soil.

As far as switching in large farming operations, this will happen, as there is motivation to change practices or methods, as more farms want to go the organic route as the price is much higher for the end product.

But, as far as homeowners go, there is no reason to destroy these mycorrhizal fungi in your soil. Use less fertilizer that is chemical and rely more on organic type fertilizers. As with slow release type organic fertilizer, you will find a healthier soil. So, good luck!

## MISUNDERSTOOD INSECTS

It often blows my mind when people say to me how can I get rid of this bug or that bug or this butterfly. My answer to them is "**WHY?**" "**Why**" do you want to destroy something that causes you no harm? Or in some places, is actually a beneficial insect feeding up on the real culprit.

Earlier this spring, and now as we move into fall, I hear we have so many Ladybird Beetles, and how do I get rid of them. That was the steady comment for awhile this spring, and now it is creeping up again as a popular question.

Here in our home, we have those friendly fellows almost year around. We don't have pests on our houseplants and these critters keep them in check. Plus, in your gardens and landscapes they eat aphids by the hundreds and other insects as well. They are beneficial to our environment. So tell folks the pluses of these little critters compared to the downfalls.

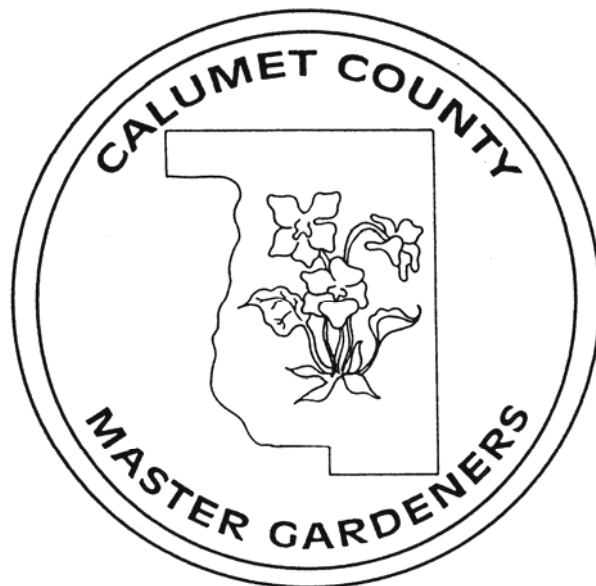
Last year, before I could get to this lady's home, she had already taken a can of Raid to a group of beneficial wasps that were already feeding on the culprit. **So "why" kill them,** why didn't she wait for someone to check it out first? The answer was, the Raid can was closer and easier than seeking help!

This year, I have had calls on we are being over-run with butterflies and when they go into more detail, it turns out that it was the Red Admiral butterfly which feeds on nettles. We have seen several swarms of them and they weren't hurting a thing in life that matters. According to Linda Williams, Forest Health Specialist with the WI Dept. of Natural Resources - Northeast Region, she told us that every 8-10 years in Wisconsin the population of Red Admirals can get quite large but they are only feeding on nectar from flowers or trees and eat only nettles. So therefore are no harm to anyone. So enjoy this wonderful little butterfly.

So if you run into folks that don't understood insects, please help to educate them.

**Calumet County Master Gardeners**

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# Fall 2007 Newsletter