



Bluff Country Master Gardeners



Volume 5, No. 6

June 2006

JUNE 5th MASTER GARDENER MEETING

(Qualifies for one hour of continuing education)

“Enjoying Mississippi Water Plants”

Monday, June 5th

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Speaker – Master Gardener, Lynn Nelson
La Crosse County Administrative Building
Basement Auditorium

This will be a presentation on the plants you will see when traveling thru the backwaters of the Mississippi by kayak or canoe.

Note: Bring your name tags. Wearing a name tag at our monthly meetings helps us to get acquainted with one another!

Deadheading to Prolong Bloom

Promote new flowers and make your garden look better by deadheading — the process of removing spent flower blossoms. You can snip, prune, pinch, cut or use any means you want to remove the old, dead blooms. It is best to remove spent blooms shortly after the flower has died.

Plants have flowers to make seeds. Once seeds have been produced, the plant has satisfied its need to reproduce and flower production stops. By deadheading, you trick the plant into trying to make seed by making more flowers.

Not all plants will produce more flowers after deadheading. Many perennial plants and flowering shrubs are pre-programmed to bloom only once. However, deadheading will improve the appearance, and often the vigor, of these plants. ♣

Next MG Board Meeting

June 5

6:30 p.m.

Basement Auditorium

All Master Gardeners are welcome to attend.

NEXT MG MEETING – July 10th

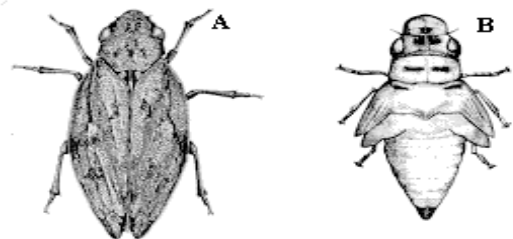
Mark your calendar for July 10th. We will be touring the gardens of John and Jodi Hoscheit in Onalaska. John will be cooking up some Cajun deep fried turkey for our summer pot luck event. ♣

Froth on leaves and stems caused by spittlebugs

Garden plants "frothing" about the leaves and stems are victims of a small pest insect called the spittlebug. Small, hopping, torpedo-shaped insects as adults, spittlebugs are similar in appearance to leafhoppers, but are larger and stockier, explained Glenn Fisher, an entomologist with the Oregon State University Extension Service. But unlike leafhoppers, young spittlebugs are covered with froth.

Spittlebugs introduce a toxin into a plant's vascular system, causing the leaves to appear distorted, yellow and/or stunted. They feed on the leaves of many ornamental and vegetable garden host plants. Some even occur on conifers. They also like to eat many types of grasses and weeds and have also been implicated in transmitting a virus to strawberries.

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Spittlebug. A, Adult. B, Nymph.



Kitchen and Garden

Recipes *from Lynn Tschumper, Master Gardener*

Rhubarb Jam

5 cups chopped fresh rhubarb
4 cups white sugar
1 cup crushed pineapple, drained
1 teaspoon strawberry flavored gelatin

Directions: In a large saucepan or stock pot, combine the rhubarb, sugar and pineapple. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Boil for 10 minutes, stirring frequently. After the rhubarb mixture has boiled for 10 minutes, remove from heat, and stir in strawberry flavored gelatin powder. Transfer to sterile jars, and seal allow jars to cool in a draft-free area. Refrigerate jars after seal has been broken.

Sesame Asparagus

6 fresh asparagus spears, trimmed
1/4 teaspoon salt (optional)
1 teaspoon butter or margarine
1 teaspoon lemon juice
3/4 teaspoon sesame seeds, toasted

Directions: To toast sesame seeds: heat skillet to medium hot. Add sesame seeds and stir just until they get brown or start popping. Remove them from pan immediately.

Put 1/2 in. of water into skillet, bring to a boil. Place asparagus in skillet; sprinkle with salt if desired. Reduce heat; cover and simmer until crisp-tender, about 2 minutes, they should look bright green but still be firm.

Meanwhile, melt butter; add lemon juice and sesame seeds. Drain asparagus; drizzle with the butter mixture.

You can leave out the lemon juice if you prefer. I use lemon pepper as a seasoning instead. ♣

Bulbs: care of tulips/daffodils after blooms

Colorful spring-flowering bulbs like tulips and daffodils welcome spring's arrival year after year with just a minimum of care. But some common mistakes in handling bulb plants after they bloom can weaken them and lead to fewer flowers next year.

The most important thing to remember is that leaves must remain on the plants until they turn yellow. While this yellowing foliage isn't attractive, it is a sign that the leaves have manufactured enough food to build a strong bulb for a good flower display next year.

You can hide the unsightly leaves by setting out flowering annuals among the bulb plants in early or mid-May.

To encourage strong bulb development, fertilize the bed soon after the plants are above ground and again one month later. Pale or undersized leaves usually indicate a need for fertilizer. Apply two pounds of 5-10-5 or a similar fertilizer per 100 square feet. If in doubt about this need for fertilizer, submit a soil sample for testing.

If you cut the blooms, use a sharp knife. Take only one or two leaves per plant to use with the flowers in an arrangement. Taking more leaves than this weakens the bulbs.

Since seed production takes food away from the developing bulbs, remove old flowers before they produce seed.

A decline in flower size and numbers means that it's time to divide and replant the bulbs. Dig the clumps in spring and replant them right away, or hold the bulbs in a well-ventilated spot until fall. Digging and replanting in fall is often difficult because the plant leaves are gone and it is hard to find the bulbs. ♣



Volunteer Opportunities

Riverside International Friendship Gardens (RIFGI)

Location: North end of Riverside Park, and East of the LACVB

(Parking, picnic tables, and restrooms are nearby)



Planting – May & June

Planting in the gardens should commence toward the end of May and into June. We will start with the Chinese and French gardens and work our way north to the German and Russian garden as time and weather permit. Planting days will be schedules for week nights and Saturdays during June. Since this is our first large group project, we are hoping that everyone will volunteer at some point throughout the summer. Many hands will be needed to plant the gardens and also to supervise the weekly maintenance throughout the summer months. Community volunteers will help with the weekly maintenance. Many of you have already signed up to help. THANK YOU! If you have not had the opportunity to sign up you may do so at the June meeting or just show up at the gardens on the scheduled work days. Work days will be posted on our BCMG web site, the UW Extension Activities Line (608.785.6418), email updates, and via the phone tree.

Contact: Marilyn Rebarchek 781.3278 or Jackie Jorgenson 452.3419

NOTE: Call the UW Extension Activities Line to find out 'What's happening at the RIFGI'! Phone: 608.785.6418

Tentative Maintenance Schedule – June - October

Monday evenings from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Wednesday evenings from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Saturday morning from 8:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Farmers' Markets- Three Sites

June through October 2006

There is still time to sign up to volunteer at the 2006 Farmers' Markets. We have expanded to three sites this year; the original Festival Foods Parking Lot in Onalaska on Sundays 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., the City of La Crosse Public Parking Lot (across from Wettstein's) on Saturdays 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and Cameron Park Parking Lot in La Crosse (across from the Food Co-op) on Friday evenings 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.. This is a great opportunity for both master gardeners and interns to earn volunteer time while learning a lot about many gardening/horticulture topics. Master Gardener Manuals will be provided at the site and may be used to look up answers to questions from the public.

TELEPHONE OR E-MAIL CONTACTS:

Onalaska Festival Foods - Jane Travis 783-4665 or janetravis@att.net

City of La Crosse Parking Lot - Rita Champion 780-3971 or 787-3255 or email: rchampion@charter.net

Cameron Park Parking Lot - Lynn Tschumper - 483-2718 or lynwood@mwt.net

La Crosse County Fair – July 12 – 16, 2006

Volunteers are needed at the Master Gardener Educational Booth at the La Crosse County Fair. Hundreds of people pass by the booth during the 5 days that the fair is in progress and those that have an interest stop to talk, ask questions or sign up for the next MG class. This can be educational for both the public and for us as MG's. We utilize our reference materials that we received in the MG class and are able to answer a wide range of questions concerning gardening for the public. This is also a great way to meet other MG's as you will be working in pairs for a 2 – 3 hour shift.

Contact Sue Kellogg (786.3033) or Jane Travis (783.4665)

WKBT TV Garden Forum

More information to become available soon. ♣

**Bluff Country Master Gardeners
La Crosse County UW-Extension Office
400 4th Street North
La Crosse, WI 54601**



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**OUR Mission is to . . . GROW in our knowledge of horticulture SHARE our knowledge with others
INSPIRE our community through volunteerism ENCOURAGE in our youth an enthusiasm for growing things.**

Our Bluff Country Master Gardener Association Board Members are: State MG Website Address:

President..... Marilyn Rebarchek, 608.781.3278
 Vice-President..... Rita Champion, 608.781.1853
 SecretaryJanice Hatt, 608.788.8815
 TreasurerDiane Palm, 507.643.6970
 Historian Sue Kellogg, 608.786.3033
 At LargeDoris Doherty, 608.781.0889
 At Large.....Lynn Tschumper, 608.483.2718
 Ex-officio memberSteve Huntzicker, 608.785.9593
 e-mail address: steve.huntzicker@ces.uwex.edu
 State Board Representative Marilyn Rebarchek

<http://www.hort.wisc.edu/mastergardener>

The Bluff Country Master Gardeners Newsletter is published monthly, excluding December.

Editor.....Margo Merola, mmerola@charter.net

*Deadline to submit articles for the next newsletter is June 10th.

All submissions must be print ready.

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Froth (from page 1)

"They position their little bodies so that their heads point downward," explained Fisher. "They insert their beaks into a stem, bud or new leaf tissue. Within a day or two, a white froth, or spittle begins to cascade down over their bodies from small glands located near their tail ends. This froth protects the spittlebug from predators and prevents it from drying out." The spittlebug over-winters in the egg stage, attached to leaf stems and leaves. Nymphs hatch out of these eggs in March and April.

On strawberries, spittlebug injury is more than cosmetic or annoying. Spittlebug injury may result in fewer and smaller strawberries, he said." They can cause reduced yield and inferior fruit when numbering just a few per foot of strawberry row," he said. To reduce spittlebug damage in your garden, Fisher recommends raking away leaves and stems of strawberry plants during the winter to help remove egg sources. Hose the plants with a relatively sharp stream of water to dislodge some spittlebugs from your plants and wash away their froth. Without the froth, some of the very small spittlebugs will dry out, providing some control, said Fisher. After clearing away the froth, insecticidal soaps may also be effective on spittlebugs, he added. ♣



PHONE A MASTER GARDENER

Rita Schuettpelz 608.785.2454

If you have a gardening question that you can't find the answer for in your MG manual, you may call our 'on-call' master gardener, Rita Schuettpelz.