

Eau Claire Area Master Gardener News

February 2022

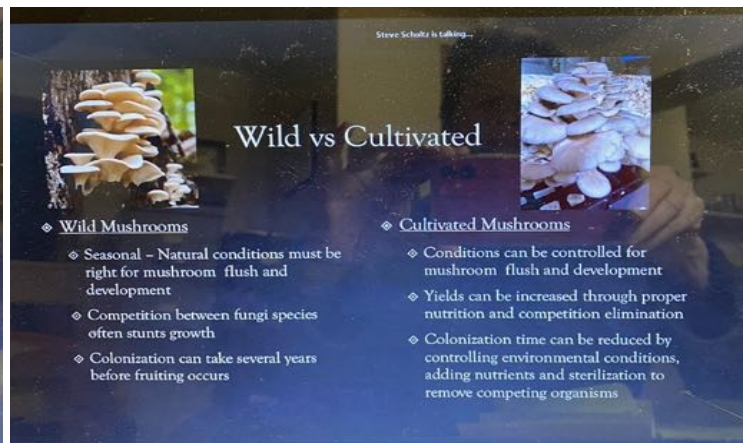
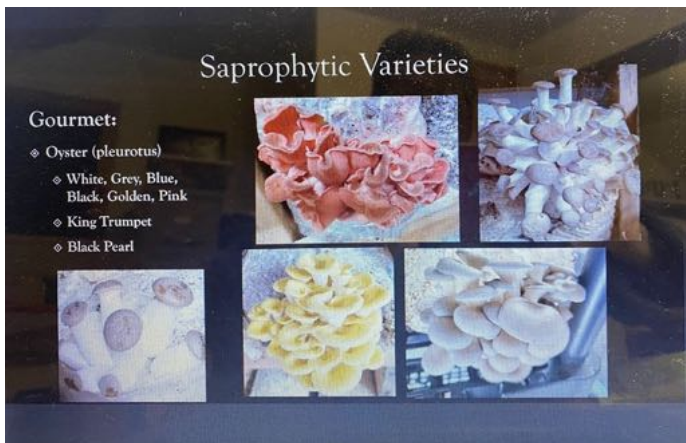


Learning About Mushrooms : Steven Scholtz Presentation to the ECAMGVs

by Aruna (including pictures)

Steve Scholtz gave an interesting and informative talk to the Eau Claire Area Master Gardener Volunteers (ECAMGV) via Zoom on January 17th. After showing us slides on the subject he gave us a virtual tour of his facilities. He cultivates mushrooms at his farm with the help of his wife and family.

What is a mushroom? It is a fungal organism, specifically it is the fruiting body of the fungus. The main portion, also called the mycelium, is usually not visible and is underground. Mushrooms are eighty to ninety percent water.



Saprophytes are decomposers. They get their nutrients from dead or decaying plant matter.

Mushrooms can be wild or cultivated.

Cultivation methods are

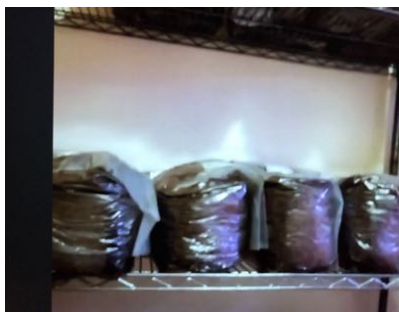
- Outdoor logs
- Straw in bags/buckets
- Supplemental sawdust

Stages of cultivation:

1. Substrate preparation: in the wild it is death of a tree

For cultivation:

- Logs – need to be cut and aged
- Straw – Chopped, hydrated and Pasteurized at 160 – 180° C for one to two hours
- Supplemental Sawdust mixed with Equal amount Soy hull, hydrated, Steam sterilized at 200° C for about twenty hours



Preparation of substrate – see above including the cement mixer used in the preparation of substrate.

(continued on page 6)



Local Master Gardener News

Changing e-mail? Moving?

If you do, please remember to notify the ECAMG and the newsletter editor of your new e-mail address and/or mailing address so you don't miss any Eau Claire Area Master Gardener happenings!



Email your new information to Carol Cox at c7w6c2200@charter.net or notify her by snail mail at 1908 Hogeboom Ave., Eau Claire, WI 54701 (or call her at 715-783-0016 - cell).



MGV

**Bulletin Board
Postings Stories
and
Opportunities!!!**



Note:
The ECAMGAV Board minutes may be accessed at <https://www.eauclaireareamastergardener.org>.

Join us by Zoom for:

**Non-chemical Buckthorn Removal Methods
February 21, 2022 at 7 p.m.**

(Zoom Link to be sent the week before presentation)

Counts for 1 hour of MGV Continuing Education

From our speaker and what you will learn:

My name is Evan Croft, and I am from Stanley, WI. My wife and I moved to Stanley this past year and live in town with our three dogs. I have spent the last year of my life in my graduate program through UW Stout for conservation biology. I will wrap that up in May after my thesis project on non-chemical buckthorn removal methods.



Picture provided by Evan Croft

European Buckthorn, *Rhamnus cathartica*, and Glossy Buckthorn, *Frangula alnus* are two invasive buckthorn species that are running rampant throughout the Midwest. I am currently surveying and removing buckthorn from Sportsman Lake in Withee, WI. To date, I have cut, removed, and placed 80 bags, and hand pulled 66 individuals for a total of 146 removed in 2021. I will be discussing multiple aspects of these plants including their invasive properties and characteristics, general overview on current treatment methods, and my non-chemical removal methods, the reasoning for non-chemical treatment use, and would love to answer any questions you may have about this invasive species.

Note from the editor:

Time flies and it flies even faster when you are having fun. I stopped to think (I don't do that often enough, I guess) as I started doing the February ECAMGVA newsletter and discovered that I have been doing the newsletter since the February 2008 issue – 14 years! It has been a privilege!

ECAMGA Board

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Judy Mitchell	http://jmitchell@pobox.com	715-877-1354



ECAMGV

2022
Calendar

All meetings during the COVID19 pandemic will be held by Zoom invitation.

February 21: Evan Croft – Control of Buckthorn
 March 12: Growing Together Online Seminar
 April 18: Nora Mitchell on South African Plants
 May: Greenhouse visit to learn about behind the scenes
 May 22: Plant Sale with Hosta Society and EC Garden Club
 June: Visit Irvine Park wildflower garden
 July: Learn about landscaping
 August: Outdoor education
 September: Visit BCR Butterfly garden
 October 7: Photo Contest deadline
 October: TBA
 November: TBA
 December: Annual Meeting and Christmas Party



The Quest

By Judy Mitchell

February is a great time to make plans for your vegetable garden and maybe to do something just a little differently this year. I am intrigued with the idea of growing vegetables in containers.

It is easy to find information on container gardening. It can be found on-line, in books and in magazines. Seed catalogs often flag varieties, new and old, that are suitable for container gardening. I did a little looking around and then decided that as a Master Gardener Volunteer, my first stop should have been UWEX. That is how I found UWEX publication A3382, Container Gardening, available at the Learning Store (<https://learningstore.uwex.edu>) or on the Extension Horticulture website (<https://hort.extension.wisc.edu>).

Publication A3382 covers the basics of container gardening: what to plant, where to place the container, when to water, how to fertilize and why. If you need to know the difference between a soilless mix and a soil-containing planting medium, it is covered in this publication. So are the pros and cons of using one or the other type of mix and tips for how to choose the right container. The container and light requirements for a long list of vegetable crops are listed on pages 4 and 5.

Armed with this publication and a few seed catalogs, I am ready to make a plan that goes beyond buying seeds. I need to make sure I have the right containers, growing medium and fertilizer and I need to be prepared to put most of the containers in full sun, even if that means walking a bit farther to water them.



Picture flickr.com

Meet a Master Gardener – Jo-Ann Clark

Hi ~ My name is Jo-Ann Clark, and I am an Eau Claire Area Master Gardener Volunteer (ECAMGV). I took my training in 2010. I have a difficult time keeping my own yard and gardens in shape, so I look for nonphysical opportunities to help the Master Gardeners (MGs) in other ways. I found my “niche” with taking photos of our events and putting the photos in scrapbooks to keep as a historical record of our group. I also sent the photos to members e-mails and made slideshow presentations of our Garden Seminars through the years that have been shared at our local meetings.



Photo by Jo-Ann Clark (selfie)

I was on the Winter Garden Seminar planning committee for many years and contacted garden catalog companies to give us catalogs to handout to attendees at the seminars. I really found this enjoyable. Maybe that is because of my background in sales jobs and administrative assistance positions and my marketing degree from the Chippewa Valley Technical College.

As we all became more “technical savvy” I became the person behind the ECAMGV’s Facebook page from 2015 to the present. This has been very rewarding ~ posting our local happenings and finding garden articles of interest to share. The jokes always get the most comments. 😊 So, watch for photos and smile for me as I record your gardening experiences in the ECAMGV group.



Events

Growing Together

2022 Western Wisconsin Spring Garden Seminars



SAVE THE DATE: Virtual Presentations. Saturday, March 12

9:30 am. Gravel Gardens -- Gardens that Rock!

Jeff Epping from Olbrich Botanical Gardens

The talk will look at earth-friendly gravel gardens that require less of just about everything – water, mulch, energy, chemicals and most importantly labor – but give back so much more. Jeff Epping, Director of Horticulture at Olbrich Botanical Gardens, created a number of gravel gardens at Olbrich and in his own home garden that you can easily incorporate into your home landscape, as well. Don't confuse these gardens with traditional rock or alpine gardens that look more rocky than green and require a great deal of time to maintain. These sustainable gravel gardens are as colorful as any perennial planting around, provide food and habit for pollinators and other insects and require up to 80% less maintenance than a traditional perennial planting. Jeff will show you how to replace conventional lawns, expensive annual plantings, and labor-intensive perennial beds with these easy-to-maintain gravel gardens. If you want a garden that truly rocks, look no further than a gravel garden.

11 am. Creating an Organic Bee Lawn

Bob Dahm, aka Dr. Organic

Bob Dahm, aka Dr. Organic is the owner of Organic Lawn Care Service in the Twin Cities. His service creates alternatives to traditional lawns including lawns that encourage bees. He believes that lawns are a barren desert to a foraging bee. Even weed flowers like Creeping Charlie and dandelions are not as healthy for bees as we once thought. Organic Bee Lawn was developed by the University of Minnesota Bee Lab to help connect habitat islands and achieve genetic diversity and increase habitat. Even a small corner of your lawn can make a difference. Plant a bee lawn today!

These seminars are open to the public and we welcome both new and experienced gardeners to attend.

Registration for the Growing Together Seminar is due by **March 4**. The YouTube Live link will be emailed to you before the day of the seminar on March 12. Paid registrants will have exclusive access to the recorded presentations for a limited time after the seminar concludes. Registration is at <https://www.eauclaireareamastergardener.org/> and the \$5 fee can be paid online or mailed to the Eau Claire Extension Office at 227 First St. West, Altoona, WI 54720. Questions can be directed to Andy Heren at UW– Extension at 715 839 4712 or andy.heren@co.eau-claire.wi.us.

Brought to you by Western Wisconsin Master Gardener Associations from: Barron, Dunn, Chippewa Valley, Eau Claire and St. Croix Valley.



Beaver Creek Reserve
S1 County Road K
Fall Creek, WI 54742
715-877-2212



Photo from BCR

Owling for Beginners

Wednesday, February 9 from 9:00-10:00 AM

**This is a FREE virtual program.*

February is the beginning of the breeding season for owls. Find out how to find them when they are most active and learn about what kinds of owls are most commonly found in Wisconsin. A registration link will be sent to the registrant's email address prior to the start of the program. **Registration ends Monday, Feb 7. [Register now!](#)**

We Need Seed!

The birds are hungry, and we are out of food! We are looking for donations of any of the seed listed below. We keep the feeders filled for the birds, for our visitor's enjoyment, and for our bird research projects. Beaver Creek Reserve and the birds than you!

-Corn

-Mixed Seed

-Peanuts

-Suet



Photo from BCR

Donations can be dropped off at the Wise Nature Center during open hours: 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and noon to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday. No need to call ahead.



Master Naturalist Program Registration Now Open

Join Beaver Creek Reserve (BCR) staff and guest speakers **Sunday, July 31 to Friday, August 5** for this year's volunteer training! The Wisconsin Master Naturalist program is a network of well-informed volunteers dedicated to conservation service, leadership, and lifelong learning.

The Master Naturalist training provides 40 hours of education in a variety of natural history topics and Master Naturalist service areas. Through expert-led trainings, Master Naturalists are equipped to address challenges facing the state by making positive impacts through stewardship, citizen science, and educational activities. Trainings have an emphasis on outdoor field experiences with some classroom instruction and are taught by professional natural resource educators and scientists.

This week-long training will help volunteers gain valuable knowledge and skills to grow as a leader within their community. Topics include geologic history, aquatics, vegetation and wildlife, astronomy, as well as human impact on the environment. This course is limited to twenty people and must be 18 years old or older. [Learn more & register!](#)

Garden Radio: Tune in at 7:30 a.m. to 96.3 on FM WHYS on the first Saturday of each month to hear local garden experts on seasonal topics. Starting Saturday, February 5 listen to Master Gardener, Andy Heren, talk about seeds and seed starting. On March 5, hear Master Gardener, Dora Woods, discuss maple syrup production.



Mushrooms continued from page 1...

2. Spawn Inoculation: Spawn is the seed for gardening.

In the wild two spores landing on a suitable substrate is sufficient.

-for Logs Drill and Fill

- Straw Mix and spawn, pack in containers

- Supplemented Sawdust Add spawn in a sterile environment with hood that runs sterilized air and bags are sealed (see at right).

Spawn prep- Spores are collected from the cap of mushrooms onto a foil and a few are placed in a petri dish with Agar and dextrose under sterile conditions, three cc/five pound bag. Care is taken to prevent contamination.



3. Incubation: in the wild two to five years

-Logs nine months to two years

-Straw twenty Days to one month

-Supplemental Sawdust ten to fourteen days. Some varieties take a bit longer. Eg. Oysters take ten days, King six weeks



Growing tent

4. Fruiting: In the wild when conditions are right.

When the nutrient runs out and there is adequate light, temperature and humidity, fruit formation occurs.

Yield is high in cultivated conditions with three cc's of spawn into a five-pound bag yielding up to fifty pounds of mushrooms.

Three crops are possible with a single spawn though the yield is halved every time the spawn is reused.



Fruiting conditions can be improved by techniques like these:

Soaking the logs in cold water

Straw cold shocking

Supplemental Sawdust Cutting holes in the bag promotes fruiting

Some Fun Facts:

1. Up to 10 generations can be grown from the same culture if you can prevent spawn contamination.

2. The world's largest living organism is a fungus, located in Oregon. It is about forty square miles across!!



***“Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow but today of its strength.”
-Corrie Ten Boom***



Above is Jael Wolf's 2021 Photo Contest entry entitled "No Rain In the Midsummer."



A picture from down memory lane. Don't know who took it - think it might have been Jo-Ann Clark. But, in case you don't recognize it, this bloom of daffodils was out at the old Expo Gardens that the Master Gardeners tended for years.



The male Cardinal is such an impressive bird. Did you know that the Northern Cardinal got it's name from the Northern Cardinal because the colorful male bird resembled the Catholic cardinal's robes and garb? Also, during courtship, affection is expressed by the males feeding their females seeds in a method known as "beak to beak" almost looking like they are kissing.



Eye Candy



An interesting picture off of Pintrest called "the Mushroom Snake."



Even the lowly dandelion has it's supporters in the garden as it can be used to make wine or in salads.



A lovely picture that makes one dream of what to change around in the garden come spring. Note the Purple Shamrock at the bottom of the picture. This is a houseplant in our Zone 4 region but lovely to bring outside during the summer months. If it were hardy here it would likely be a weed but it makes a delightful houseplant and summer "annual." (Picture from Pintrest)



What a lovely use of garden art! (Picture from Pintrest)



It is hard to think of lilies blooming when we are experiencing below zero weather. That is why it is so delightful to look at our garden pictures from past years. This lovely lily was photographed by Jo-Ann Clark in her backyard garden.



The Hummingbird is always a delight to have in one's garden! They are so fast and so small and their nests are such delicate little things. . (Picture from Pintrest)



Photo by Carol Cox

In the Bleak Mid-Winter by Christina Rossetti

*In the bleak mid-winter
Frosty wind made moan
Earth stood hard as iron;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-winter
Long ago.*



*Christina Rossetti
1830-1894
(Photo public domain)*

Unless otherwise noted, articles for this newsletter are submitted and/or written by ECAMGA members or the newsletter editor, Carol W. Cox. Unless otherwise noted, graphics are from clipart. Newsletter layout by Carol W. Cox



For more Eau Claire County UW Cooperative Extension information go to our website:

www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/eauclaire

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Fax: 715-839-6277

M-F 8AM-5PM



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