



NEWSLETTER

Eau Claire Area Master Gardener News

October 2023



A letter from your President, Ellen Terwilliger

Master Gardeners,

Fall is in the air with colors popping out in our Wisconsin forests. In the last 24 hours I've gotten a welcome 1.5 inches of much needed rain.

Welcome to our new newsletter format. For 15 years Carol Cox has been writer, editor, photographer in chief for our association newsletter. She was planning to retire from the newsletter at the end of this year. Because of health issues that date has gotten moved up. We wish Carol the best in the coming days and months. She has gone above and beyond working for this association. Andy Heren, our Vice President, has graciously agreed to take on a new format of Newsletter which you are seeing. It will highlight just a few association events that are coming up soon. Thank you Andy!

At our last meeting in September the board confirmed we will apply for three WIMGA grants for the Forrest Street Youth Garden, Extension Teaching Garden and Menomonie Street project.

You will have received a Google Form Survey from the board on September 23. Please take just a moment to fill that out by October 7th so we can improve our association and communications. We are working on getting our website adjusted so that you will have the option to pay your dues online.

Fall Clean-Up and Other Jobs

by Judi Robison, MGV

article by Aruna Ahluwalia



Gardening in Wisconsin can be a challenge, given the short growing season. It seems like we just started, and it was spring and suddenly the trees are changing color, blooms are getting done. It is time for a clean-up! How much should I do now, are all the plants the same? These were a few of the questions on my mind going into the talk by Judi Robison, a MGV who has been gardening both professionally and personally for over 40 years. She invited us to her garden to talk about Fall Clean-Up. Fall is a great time to clean up the garden, divide and replant, pull out and store tender bulbs, plant new perennials, trees, bulbs, etc. Pruning, how much and when varies with the type of plant/tree.

Most of the perennials can be cut back in the fall, for example, Peonies and Hydrangeas. Be sure to watch for diseases, like mildew, before you throw those in the compost pile.

Some can reseed and make more plants (Rudbeckia, Coneflowers) and some others feed the birds and critters (Baptisia, Sedums).

Some of the plants are best left for spring cut-back (Ornamental grass, Russian Sage, Butterfly Bush, Clematis).

Tender bulbs (Canna, Dahlia, Calla) can be pulled out after the first frost, cut back on the foliage, dried and stored in a cool place for winter. Ponds need to be cleared of organic waste and covered with a net. Stop feeding fish when the temperature of the water is about 60 degrees to let them hibernate.

Tropical plants (Elephant Ears, houseplants) in pots need to be brought in before the first frost after cutting back. Watch for pests and gradually move them indoors.

Mulch the garden and tree beds. Leaves, straw, hay or pine needles are great. Pots need to be emptied, cleaned with water, and brushed and sterilized with a 10% bleach solution, dried and stored. If leaving the pots outside, store them upside down. Drain hoses and store indoors.

Wash and clean, dry and lubricate and sharpen the garden tools so they are ready to go for the spring. Some of the garden tools that are very useful are the perennial saw, Root Slayer hand tool, and the Cobra Head weeder. A hand sharpener to sharpen your tools is a great addition, too.

Fall is also time to create something new. Add a new garden, redo an existing one, plant new bulbs, trees, bushes. Make sure to plant at appropriate depth, water, and mulch.

A good article recommended by Judi, "34 Perennials to Cut Back in the Fall," can be read by clicking the green button below.

A nice spread followed the talk, and it was one of those gorgeous crisp Fall evenings. Wonderful company and outdoor tables enabled us to enjoy a lovely evening.

34 Perennials to Cut Back in the Fall



ECAMGVA Board Openings

If any currently certified Eau Claire Master Gardener is interested in serving on the board please contact any current board members - listed at the bottom of the newsletter. We meet once a month for an hour. There are two longer planning meetings per year. Board members are voted on by the membership in December.

Officers are selected by the board in the January meeting. Board terms are three years. Officer terms are two years. It is an excellent opportunity to get to know other Master Gardeners and to earn your volunteer hours. Each of you have skills to bring to the organization.

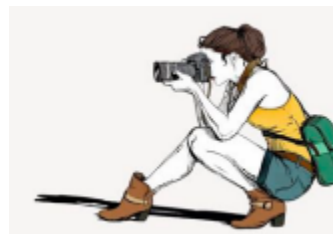
Calling All Carpenters!

We need a volunteer with carpentry skills to help us at the Youth Garden in North River Fronts Park. This volunteer will develop detailed plans for replacing or repairing a number of raised beds, develop a list of materials and a cost estimate, and help us with the work. We'd prefer to have the planning completed this Fall and the work completed sometime in 2024. The volunteer does not need to be a Master Gardener. Contact Judy Mitchell either directly or via Andy Heren.



Photo Contest Cancelled

Carol Cox has coordinated the photo contest for many years. With her recent health concerns, we are going to cancel the photo contest for this year. Thanks for any of you who had already sent Carol photos.



Upcoming Educational Opportunities

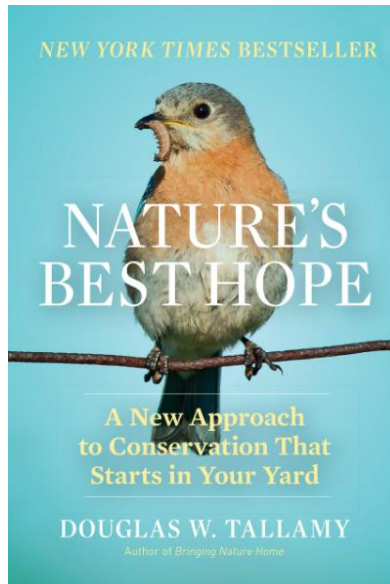


Nature's Best Hope - Chippewa Valley Book Festival

Recent headlines about the declining global insect population and three billion fewer birds in North America are a bleak reality check about how ineffective our current landscape designs have been at sustaining the plants and animals that sustain us. Such losses are not an option if we wish to continue our current standard of living on Planet Earth. The good news is that none of this is inevitable. Tallamy will discuss simple steps that each of us can—and must—take to reverse declining biodiversity, why we must change our adversarial relationship with nature to a collaborative one, and why we, ourselves, are nature's best hope.

Registration for this event is through the Chippewa Book Festival (At this point all seats are full, but you can register to watch it online)

<https://www.cvbookfest.org/festival-events/douglas-tallamy>



***Nature's Best Hope* Discussion on
Monday, October 16
5:00-6:30 PM**

After Doug Tallamy's presentation on October 14, Master Gardeners, their friends, and the public are invited to participate in a discussion about how we might implement the concepts in his book, *Nature's Best Hope*. We are at a critical point where we are losing so many native plant and animal species that the ecosystem services we rely on like water, air, and pollination are becoming seriously compromised. However, if many people make small changes, we can restore healthy ecological networks and weather the challenges ahead. Even if you have not had a chance to read the book or attend the presentation, please come and learn and share ideas about what we can each do to promote a healthier planet through how we garden.

Join the discussion on Monday, October 16, at the Eau Claire County Extension Office,
227 1st Street W, Altoona, 5:00-6:30 pm

ECAMGVA Board Members

Ellen Terwilliger, President

Andy Heren, Vice President

Jeannie Chromey, Treasurer
Barb Huggins

Sue Waits, Secretary
Judy Mitchel

Chris Southworth

Louise White-Roach

Contact us



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