

Spring 2021

Issue 65



Anemone De Caen bud.

Digging in Dodge



Inside this issue:

<i>Upcoming Meetings</i>	2
<i>MG Scholarship Recipients</i>	3
<i>Master Gardener of the Month</i>	3
<i>Watering Gardens</i>	4
<i>Keeping Your Plants Healthy—Dealing with Dry Soils & Drought</i>	5 & 6
<i>Master Gardener Projects</i>	7 & 8
<i>Volunteer Requirements</i>	8

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 Marianne Zastrow
 Terry Zimmerlee
 Faith Zoellick



Linda Allen: 150 hours
Caryl Watterson: 150 hours (not pictured)



Debra Steinich: 250 hours



Dennis Loomis: 500 hours

Upcoming Meetings

Anyone with an interest in gardening is welcome to attend the following free programs. Master Gardener meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of the month. Unless otherwise noted, the meetings are at 6:30 p.m. in the Administration Building, 127 E. Oak Street, Juneau.

Until further notice, in-person Master Gardener meetings are on pause.
For meeting updates watch for emails or Facebook posts.

Board of Directors



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Siberian iris
(*Iris siberica*)

Master Gardener Websites

<http://www.wimastergardener.org/>

<https://wimga.org/>

<http://dodge.uwex.edu/master-gardener/>

Master Gardener E-mail

askamastergardener@att.net



Japanese iris (*Iris ensata*)



In the Greek language the word “iris” means rainbow.

Blue Flag Iris *Iris versicolor* - Native

2021 Scholarship Recipients

Aiden Bobholz and Lindsay Propst have each been awarded a 2021 Dodge County Master Gardener Association \$1000 Scholarship.



Bobholz, a senior at Randolph High School, plans to attend Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa and major in agronomy. In high school Aiden was a member and an officer in FFA and worked in the school greenhouse. He also participated in track and field and cross country for three years and volunteered in numerous community activities. Aiden worked for Alsum Foods and Phillips Crop Care, where he scouted for weeds, disease and insects, staged winter wheat, and took stand counts of corn and soybeans.



Lindsay Propst, a senior at Beaver Dam High School, plans to attend UW Madison and major in genetics and genomics. Propst is a FFA member on the Parliamentary Procedure team, active in varsity tennis and captain of the soccer team, a member of BDHS marching band, National Honor Society and Student Council as well as 4-H and other community groups. Lindsay works on her family's farm where she helps with planting and harvesting crops and raising hogs for market.

“Without hard work, nothing grows but weeds.”—Gordon B. Hinckley

Master Gardener of the Month



Ben and Judy Hagman took the Master Gardener training in 2008. They are one of the few husband/wife volunteer teams our organization enjoys. Their specialty is working in public gardens and they do an excellent job. They spent many hours helping restore and beautify the Beaver Dam Area Art Association gardens when they were located at the Seippel Center. Their work was a valuable contribution to that area.

They are always willing to lend a hand at our display gardens and at other projects that require some tender attention. They like to volunteer at these gardens, tend them, and keep them in tip-top shape. They have also worked at booths, at plant sales, and more.



Both Ben and Judy dislike weeding, especially dandelions and Canada thistles. However, their favorite tools are a shovel/spade (Ben) and a garden fork (Judy) because they can really get down and get those stubborn roots.

They enjoy getting out in the spring and taking care of those early tasks like raking and cleaning up the yard. They think it is always pleasant to be outside after a long winter.

We appreciate Ben and Judy and look forward to having them as volunteers for many more years.



The genus *Iris* is a member of the *Iridaceae* family and contains nearly 300 species.

Bearded Iris

Watering Gardens

In Wisconsin, some growing seasons have abundant rainfall and others do not. Seldom do we go through an entire season without needing some supplemental watering. Lack of water for even a short period of time can have a detrimental effect on plants as they rely on the water to draw up nutrients from their roots to the rest of the plant. Under drought stress, plants may produce stunted fruit, produce no fruit at all, or may produce tasteless, woody, or unpalatable fruit. Knowing how much, when, and how to provide water is a key factor in gardening success.

Average gardens will need an inch of water per week to thrive. Different soil types may require a different approach, as sandy soils will dry out more quickly and heavy clay soils will hold water longer. Using your finger to test the depth of soil moisture is the surest way to test when you need to water. Although the surface may be dry, there may be moisture below. If it is dry to a depth of two inches, it is time to water.

One of the worst practices is to water your garden lightly every day or every few days. This frequent sprinkling provides water to only the top layer of the soil and promotes shallow root systems. In turn, these shallow root systems are susceptible to rapid drying out and ultimate demise. Instead, water thoroughly, slowly, and deeply once a week. This applies to lawns and trees as well as gardens of all types.

The best time to water the garden is early in the morning. You want to do your best to soak the soil to a depth of 4–6 inches. Overhead watering (sprinklers) is the least efficient and least pre-

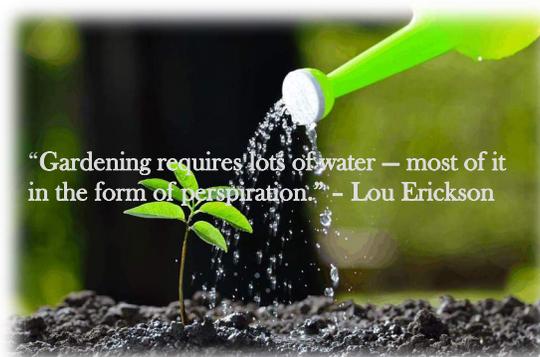
ferred method of watering. Far too much of the water is lost to evaporation. In addition, overhead watering leaves a longer “leaf wetness period” which substantially increases the risk of fungal disease. Instead, use a soaker hose, drip irrigation, or watering wand.

Smaller gardens can easily be watered with a watering wand. Travel from plant to plant or row to row and apply the water to the base of the plants, lingering about 30 seconds at each with the water at lower pressure. Make two passes and this should get the desired 4–6 inch depth of moisture into the soil.

Larger gardens, raised beds, trees, and shrubs can be watered using soaker hoses or drip irrigation systems. Soaker hoses work well for trees and raised beds. They ooze out water directed specifically where needed without waste. For larger spaces, consider a drip irrigation system. Colorado State University has an excellent publication dealing with details of drip irrigation systems: <https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/yard-garden/drip-irrigation-home-gardens-4-702/>

Regardless of the system used for supplemental watering, a good organic mulch is advantageous in the vegetable garden. The addition of grass clippings, clean straw, or chopped leaves will help retain moisture. Wood chips or shredded bark are good options around trees, shrubs, and in perennial gardens.

Carol Shirk
Master Gardener Volunteer



“Gardening requires lots of water — most of it in the form of perspiration.” - Lou Erickson



According to the American Iris Society, cultivated irises are divided into three groups: bearded, aril, and beardless irises.

Keeping Your Plants Healthy: Dealing with Dry soils and Drought

By Vijai Pandian, Horticulture Educator, Milwaukee, Kenosha and Racine Counties

As of today, (June 11) much of Wisconsin is facing dry or drought conditions. This condition is affecting many landscape and garden plants.

Lawn grass has gone dormant, moisture sensitive trees are exhibiting signs of scorch leaves, defoliation, early fall coloration and branch dieback; wilted strawberries are producing low quality fruits, flowering annuals and vegetable crops are in desperate need for daily water. Under drought stress, many plants shut down their specialized leaf tissue openings to minimize the dehydration loss. However continuous drought condition can lead to internal head load and limits the plant vital gas and nutrient exchange causing partial or complete collapse of the plant. Drought stressed plants are highly vulnerable to pest (insect and disease) and winter damages.

There are things you can do! When watering, make sure to [follow good watering practices](#). Below are some tips to mitigate drought stress on Trees & shrubs, Flowering annuals and vegetables, Herbaceous perennials, Fruits & berries and Lawns.

Trees and Shrubs

- Give trees a good soaking water once or twice a week. Newly planted trees and shrubs (1-3 years old) need twice a week of watering to about one inch depth (0.6 gallons of water is needed to cover an inch deep per square foot). If trees and shrubs are mulched, place the soaker hose underneath the mulch to ensure the soil root zone gets adequate water. Or use 15-20 gallon Tree gator bags on young trees that drips on the root ball.
- Control any weeds or turf growing underneath the tree's dripline area. Weeds and turf compete with trees for water.
- Spread wood chip mulch to about 3-4 inches deep and keep it 6 inches away from tree trunk. Avoid volcano mulching around the tree trunk.
- Don't fertilize drought stress trees and shrubs.
- Avoid unnecessary pruning or transplanting of trees and shrubs.
- Want more information on caring for your trees and shrubs during drought? [We have more resources](#).

Flowering Annuals and Vegetable Crops

- Mulch your vegetable crops and flowering annuals using clean straw or hay, rice hulls or leaf mold.
- Before watering, check the soil moisture by poking a finger an inch deep in to the soil media. If the soil is dry, give a good soaking water around its root zone area. Shallow containers and 6" deep raised beds may require twice a day watering.
- Water gently around the base of the plants and avoid splashing on its leaves. Morning hours are good for watering plants.
- Control any weeds by mulching or hoeing.
- Avoid frequent fertilization of your crops, if needed, use granular products containing some slow-release formulation and water it immediately after application.



The fruit of iris flowers takes the form of a pod. The pod contains the seeds.

Keeping Your Plants Healthy: Dealing with Dry soils and Drought

Herbaceous Perennials

- Water the perennials when the soil surface dries out moderately. Place the soaker hose few inches away from the crown of the plant and water to an inch deep (0.6 gallons of water is needed to cover a one inch depth for one square foot). If using a wand, direct the flow of the water around the base of the plant.
- Avoid overhead watering to prevent foliar diseases. Water early in the morning to reduce evaporation loss.
- Mulch helps in conserving soil moisture and smothering annual weeds. Use shredded wood or bark mulch to a depth of 3 inches.

Fruits and Berries

- Provide 3 to 5 gallons of water per week for young fruit trees. Use drip irrigation system or hand water the young fruit trees on regular basis throughout the season.
- Frequent shallow watering to a total of 1 to 1.5 inches per week is critical for small fruit crops like raspberries, blueberries and strawberries. Under hot and dry condition, water the strawberries daily.
- Maintain weed free zone around the base of the fruit and berry crops.
- Mulch using shredded bark, saw dust or wood chips to about 3 inches deep.

Lawns

- In general, it is best to let the lawn grasses go dormant to overcome heat and drought stress. However, prolong drought stress for more than 8 weeks can kill the crown of the grass. To help thrive the crown, water the lawn once a week to an inch deep. Water early in the morning to avoid evaporation loss and to prevent the spread of diseases.
- Warm and dry condition favors chinch bug population in lawn. Check out Extension publication in [diagnosing and controlling chinch bugs in lawn](#).
- Don't fertilize lawn grasses during hot and dry periods, as fertilizer is a type of salt which can further dehydrate the plants by absorbing moisture from the root zone. Also, excess salt concentration can burn the feeder roots.
- Avoid spraying ester formulated lawn herbicides when temperatures exceed 80-85°F, as the herbicide can easily volatilize causing drift injury on desired plants.
- Want more information on caring for your lawn during drought? [We have more resources](#).



Iris Borer



Iris borer caterpillars (*Macronoctua onusta*) are the most destructive insect pests of iris. Caterpillars chew holes into the leaves and tunnel all the way into the rhizome, causing severe damage. More information on the iris borer can be found at:

<https://extension.umn.edu/yard-and-garden-insects/iris-borers>



Iris is known as one of the most popular perennial bulbs or rhizomes

Master Gardener Projects



Cut Flowers for Care Centers—
Crossroads Care Center, Mayville



Bethesda Pollinator Garden—spring
clean up. Photo by Daily Citizen



Daybreak Horicon—
Spring clean up



Mayville Planters



Daybreak Waupun—
Square foot gardening



Dodge County Jail Kitchen Gardens
- Placing tomato cages.

Master Gardener Projects—Seeds for Kids



“Thank you so much for your dona-
tion of seeds for distribution to our
elementary students here at the Ran-
dolph School District! The kids were
pretty excited about them!”
Randolph Elementary School



St Johns Lomira



“Thanks so much for coming to
our school yesterday to give us the
seed packets. The kids are excited
to see them grow!”
St. Matthew's Lutheran School
Iron Ridge



The showy blooms are 6-parted with 3 often distinctly marked outer, spreading or pendent "falls" and 3 inner, erect "standards".

Master Gardener Projects—Plant Trials



Planning



Preparing



Planting



Assessing

Eager participants in the 2021 plant trials are nine youth from the former Dodge County Master Gardener Association classes. The students are working on their own in their home gardens under the supervision of their parents. They have planted and are recording their results on the forms and through photos.

“It makes me happy to know that my time back n forth to gardening class was worth it. And the time you (Carol Shirk) invested in the kiddos has paid off for sure. Thanks” - Youth Master Gardener Mom

Volunteer Hours Requirements Due to COVID

In 2021, you may report less than 24 hours of volunteer time at 2021 COVID approved projects (this may be zero hours). Only volunteer at approved projects if you feel you can do so safely.

We continue to require the minimum of 10 hours of continuing education. The 10 hours of continuing ed plus completing all the volunteer mandates will be required to certify next year. You have until December 31, 2021, to complete and report your hours.



Bearded iris can be divided any time after flowering; this is often done in July or August in the Midwest.

