

HENDRICKS GARDENER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
HENDRICKS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS

October 2023



PURDUE EXTENSION
MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM

Hendricks County Extension Office
1900 East Main Street
Danville, IN 46122-0007
317-745-9260

President's Message

Fall - a colorful season. I love the changing colors of the leaves and the crisp cool mornings.



It was good to see so many of you at AIG on October 7. Over 95 people registered. The day was enjoyable, and the speakers were excellent. A huge THANK YOU to the AIG co-chairs Susan Gackenheimer and Carol Gillaspay and their team for all their hard work planning a very educational and successful event.

Our next meeting is Tuesday, October 17. At this meeting the 2024 officers will be elected. Looking forward to seeing everyone on the 17th. Debbie

September Meeting Program Highlight

Colletta Kosiba provided an interesting presentation on seed dispersal entitled, "What's Sticking to My Sock" We enjoyed her information, photos and always humorous perspective. Thank you Colletta!



Voting for 2024 Board Members to Occur at the Oct. 17 Meeting

At the September meeting you heard the nominations for the 2024 officers to serve on the board. You can read about the board in the bylaws that are on the Hendricks County Master Gardeners website. <https://www.hendricksgardeners.com>.

At our October meeting, the slate will be reviewed, and nominations can be taken from the floor. Nominations can be for yourself or from another member nominating you. If there is more than one person nominated for a position, then a paper ballot will be taken for just that position (s) and a voice vote for the remaining position. If there is only one person for each position, then the slate will be closed, and a voice vote will be taken for the entire slate.

2024 slate and year each nominee became a Master Gardener;
President: Debbie Off 2018
Vice President: Barb Pantos 2016
Treasurer: Martha Rardin 2007
Assistant Treasurer: Bruce Crum 2008
Communications: Kathe Rae 2017
Project Coordinator: Karen Smith 2012
Secretary: Sharon Miller 2014

Be sure and come to the October business meeting and vote!



Thank you to our Nomination Committee; Vicki Coleman, Delores Elza and Annella Abell



Autumn Splendor



Oct. Program: "Bats in the Home Garden"

A presentation on bats in October seems only fitting! David Wiles, Indiana DNR Bat Survey Coordinator, will discuss bats in our gardens and share the importance of bats in our eco system.



Adventures in Gardening Wrap Up

"Whoo's in Your Garden" was the theme for our fall garden program, Adventures in Gardening, which occurred Oct. 7. What a wonderful, fun packed day for all who attended. There were six excellent presentations on a variety of interesting topics, including owls. Some of our MG interns compiled very helpful educational displays, such as the spotted lanternfly, seed saving, drip irrigation, which we can reuse.

Our generous MGs donated items for the silent auction that were garden related, holiday themed, original art, indoor and outdoor decor, gift baskets, plants and so much more. With some fierce bidding competition, the auction raised \$1750! The table decorations were so creative and awesome. As is the HCMGA tradition, we also ate tasty food and treats all day!

Our thanks to the AIG Committee, co-chaired by Susan Gackenheimer and Carol Gillaspay, for all their efforts to make AIG such a success! See photos on last page.

'24 GFAA Trees are Ordered!



We have all heard "the early bird gets the worm," but for John Dottenwhy, our tree guy, being an early bird calling Indiana DNR at 7:01 the first day of ordering, he was able to purchase 1200 trees! The tree giveaway is one of the most

popular attractions at GFAA. He was able to order; 500 Redbud, 200 sugar maple, 100 Norway Spruce, 200 Dogwood, and 200 River Birch. To help defray the cost of the trees, we received a \$500 donation from the Danville Tree Committee!

With a lot more trees for GFAA, John is asking MGs to start saving newspaper bags, shredded paper, clean grocery and vegetable bags. Please bring them to the monthly meetings.

Volunteer & Education Hours Due by Nov. 1

The deadline for reporting volunteer and education hours is Nov. 1. The Extension Office determines levels achieved by MGs and will order new badges in time for the banquet on Dec. 12th. MGs are required to complete and report 12 volunteer activity hours and 6 educational training hours per year.

2023 Calendar

- October 17th, General Meeting; Classrooms A B C
- November 21st, General Meeting; Classrooms A B C
- ***December 12th, 2023, Winter Awards Dinner***

Self-Sufficient/Self Watering/Wicking Containers

By Debra Pease

Advantages:

- Self-contained growing systems
- Raised level of containers makes maintenance & harvesting easier.
- Scale and design suited to limited space.
- Wicking containers water from the bottom up, so surface soil is drier which reduces weed competition.
- Water efficiency with less evaporation from surface of soil & run off.
- Water reservoir captures rainfall & reduces run off & loss of nutrients.
- Plants are self-watering due to water reservoir.
- Large capacity reservoirs can extend watering events.
- Drainage hole controls overwatering
- Can be started earlier in the spring.



Disadvantages:

- More expensive to build.
- There are ways to recycle plastics into a more cost-efficient container.
- Containers will freeze sooner in the fall.
- Soil and nutrient holding capacity depends on the size of the pot/container.

Supplies:

- Planter/pot/container
- PVC pipe 1 – 1 ½ inch diameter for fill pipe, ½ inch for drain hole in large pots
- French drainpipe perforated, 4- or 6-inch diameter
- Landscape fabric, woven.
- Soil
- Choice of nutrients additives
- Drill and drill bits (3/8, ¼, ¾, 7/8)
- Hack saw, miter box, scissors

Construction:

1. Select planting container without holes.
2. Most plants require a 5-gal container or larger. Can also use system in raised garden beds, just line the area (all sides and bottom) with 6mm black plastic or

pond liner. Whiskey barrels will also need a liner.

3. Choose the material to use for water reservoir (4- or 6-inch perforated French drainpipe or recycled bottles)
4. Drainage hole – drain 3 inches from bottom of container for 4-inch pipe, 5 inches from bottom for 6-inch pipe. This creates an air barrier to retard root grow & prevent plant from developing root rot. In 5-gal container 3/8 or ¼ inch hole & in large container or raised beds use ½ inch PVC pipe (6 inches in length) which is placed through the container & into the French pipe. If you do not want to use ½ inch PVC pipe drill at least ½ inch hole in container.
5. Cut fill tube out of 1 inch to 1 ½ inch PVC pipe at least 2 inches taller than container. Cut 1 end of PVC pipe with 45-degree angle, so the water will enter the container and not create a vacuum lock. Place fill tube opposite of drain hole.
6. Cut landscape fabric at least 6 inches larger than container circumference, push fabric in & around & in between container and French drainpipe. This will prevent soil from clogging perforated pipe holes & drainage hole. Make sure fabric is tight around fill tube.
7. Pack soil solidly all around the perforated pipe & fill pipe. This will create the wicking system for container. Moisten soil while packing soil to ensure it is firmly packed in container. Fill container halfway with soil, add nutrients, mix in soil thoroughly then fill to the top with soil & mix nutrient in the top layer. I mix Sustene in this layer, but you can use the nutrients you want.
8. Plant your plants in the container, water from the top to start plants & fill reservoir until water flows from the drainage hole. Seeds can also be started in wicking containers. The seeds will need to be watered from the top until they have a good root system.



Adventures in Gardening Highlights!

