

North Country Gardeners

Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Co.

UW-Extension Cooperative Extension

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Greetings!

As the heat and humidity of August continues, I remind myself that the cool mornings and shortened days of fall are just around the corner. What started out as a promising growing season has ended in near drought conditions. Total rainfall recorded at Spooner for July was 2.9 inches compared to an average of 3.8 inches. The August average rainfall in 4.3 inches and so far we have received only 1.5 inches. If this dry spell continues watering both annuals and especially perennials will be important to ensure healthy plants for the winter.

There are several educational opportunities in the up coming weeks. I hope you can take advantage of them. I would personally like to thank those Master Gardeners who have helped in the Demo Garden at the Spooner station this year. The garden is looking great and ready for self-guided tours and of course our Annual Twilight Garden Meeting, which is Thursday, August 28th.

If you have any questions about upcoming workshops or trainings, please give me a call or drop me an email. As always I welcome comments, suggestions and contributions to this newsletter.

Happy Gardening,

Kevin Schoessow
Area Ag Development Agent

University of Wisconsin-Extension

Area Agricultural Agents Office

Spooner Ag Research Station

W6646 Highway 70

Spooner, Wisconsin 54801

(715) 635-3506 or

Toll Free 800-528-1914

*"Volunteers don't necessarily have
the time--they just have the heart"
(Unknown)*

Notes from the hort desk

Lee Daniels

Summer Horticultural Assistant

Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Counties

Watering is Important Remember to water newly transplanted trees, shrubs, and other perennials. That includes those planted this spring and those from last year. Even though most of us had an over abundance of moisture earlier in the year, it is now getting dry throughout most of the area. A heavier watering weekly is much better than more frequent lighter waterings. A soaker hose is preferred. It is the same for trees and shrubs that suffered winter injury last year. After the winter damage, the root system may not be recovered enough to support the whole tree or shrub through and extended dry period, so these should be watered regularly also, no matter what their age.

Be Kind to Your Raspberries If you have summer-bearing red raspberries (Boyne, Latham, Nova, etc.) remember to cut out at ground level and remove all canes that have bore fruit immediately after the last harvest. You can thin new shoots at this time also. You should leave three or four of the sturdiest new canes per foot of row (or six to eight canes per hill in the hill system). Do not cut back cane tips until spring when you can see the extent of winter damage. This removing of old canes and thinning is important since over the years nearly all of our disease problem calls have been on those four-foot-wide raspberry "hedged" (like I have seemed to have developed at home). The maximum recommended width for raspberry rows is 12 to 15 inches. (It's on my "To-Do" list!). If you have fall bearing red raspberries (Autumn Bliss, Heritage, Summit, etc.), you can just cut or mow all canes off at the soil surface after the leaves fall off.

Watch That Mulch "Mulch volcanoes" are still popping up here and there

in the area. A "mulch volcano" is when the mulch is piled up around the base of the tree. When I see this, I just want to stop and pull the mulch back from the tree. Don't get me wrong, mulch used properly is great. It conserves moisture from the roots, insulates the ground from winter cold, and reduces lawn mower "blight". But when mulch covers the base of the tree, it can cause some serious problems such as basal rot. Usually, you won't notice the rot until it is too late. At first you may see the top of the tree or branches drying up. When you dig down around the base of the tree, you will see that most or all of the bark is rotted under the mulch. In most cases it is too late to save the tree at that point. I have seen a number of these cases over the years. For best results, mulch should be two to four inches deep, should be kept six inches away from the trunk of the tree, and should be extended out to the edge of the branches.

Annual Grape Pruning Workshop November 13

Kevin Schoessow

Area Ag Development Agent

Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Counties

For those of you who haven't attended our annual grape pruning workshop, now is your chance. This outdoor, hands-on (bring your own gloves and pruning shears) workshop will be held snow/rain or shine at the Spooner Ag Research Station Demonstration Garden, Thursday November 13, 2003 starting at 3:00 pm. Dr. Bob Tomesh, UW Horticulture Specialist, will be on hand to show participants the proper pruning technique and will give advice on grape management for northern Wisconsin.

Many gardeners may not realize this, but good quality grapes can be grown in northern Wisconsin. The keys to grape growing in our frigid climate are variety selection and management. The grapes we grow at the Spooner Research Station are American grape varieties. Fall is the ideal time to prune

American grapes and prepare them for winter. To accomplish this we cane prune. To cane prune we select out four to five canes per plant. These are one-year-old canes cut back so that 10-12 buds are left on the cane. We also leave renewal spurs among the canes. These spurs have only two buds and will produce canes the next year.

Explaining this process on paper is difficult. If you really want to learn how to prune your grapes and protect them for the winter make plans to attend this hands-on workshop. If you would like to start growing grapes, I recommend UW-Extension publication A1656 *Growing Grapes in Wisconsin*. In the past we have let participants take cutting home with them. We will continue to do this, however; we do have a limited supply.

The workshop will begin at 3:00 p.m. at the demonstration garden which is across from the Sheep Research Facility on Orchard Lane. Orchard Lane is located 1½ miles east of Spooner on Hwy 70 or ½ mile west of the Hwy 70/53 interchange. Registration is not required and there will be no charge for the public.

Annual Horticulture Twilight Meeting scheduled for August 28

Kevin Schoessow

Area Ag Development Agent

Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Counties

View more than 75 annual flowers, over 100 varieties of vegetables, and a variety of other planting at the Spooner Agriculture Research Station Annual Horticulture Twilight Meeting Thursday, August 28.

We are excited about this year's event. There will be displays and demonstrations and an opportunity to taste some of the produce from the garden.

The garden helps demonstrate and evaluate how selected perennial and annual plants

grow in soils typical of our hardiness zone, including All America Selections Award Winners, dozens of varieties of heirloom tomatoes and research varieties of tomatoes and peppers. Perennial plantings include new apple varieties, grapes, small fruits and woody ornamentals

Specialists who will be speaking at this year's open house include Brian Hudelson, Director of the State Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic, who will be speaking on diseases of the home garden; James Nienhuis, UW-Madison Vegetable Breeder, will enlighten folks with the history and cuisine of vegetables from Mexico and Central America; UW-Extension Insect Specialist Phil Pellitteri will discuss insect pests in the home garden; UW-Extension Horticulture Specialist Helen Harrison will speak on selecting garden flowers and vegetables and Bob Tomesh, UW-Extension Horticulture Specialist, will discuss heirloom tomato varieties and fruit production.

There will also be a display tent with information on invasive plants, home composting, general gardening information, canning and freezing home produce, and weeds. Food tasting will include all available ripe vegetables from the garden, fresh salsa, and gilled peppers.

All Speakers and area Master Gardeners will be available to help answer your gardening questions.

The open house will be held rain or shine from 5 p.m. until dusk. Scheduled presentations will start at 5:30 p.m. The demonstration garden is located on Orchard Lane two miles east of Spooner on Highway 70. Watch for garden meeting signs.

Event sponsors are the Spooner Ag Research Station, UW-Extension and North County Master Gardeners. Come out and see what's growing and enjoy an evening talking with fellow gardeners. For more information contact Kevin Schoessow at (715) 635-3506 or 1-(800) 528-1914.

Those amazing herbs

*Elena Felske
Master Gardener in Training*

Is the herb pronounced with an "h" or not? What is the earliest historical reference to herbs? What are some herbal folk remedies? These are some questions answered in this "hands-on" presentation about those amazing herbs. It's a fun, fast-paced seminar with something for everyone.

There are so many facets to the wonderful world of herbs that there is always something interesting to discuss. The study of herbs can take a lifetime, but most of us as Master Gardeners do not have a lifetime for one topic. So...this presentation is a basic overview. Among the topics covered are a brief history of these ancient plants, folklore, garden design and a mini research project. Throw in a few fun activities to rev it up, and you have a herbal recipe for learning. Who knows? Perhaps you will develop a true passion for herbal culture.

Here are the details. The presentation is given by Elena Felske, a new Master Gardener who works at the Winter Greenhouse in Winter, Wisconsin. She's been giving this presentation at the Greenhouse all summer. It's been tweaked and tuned, and it's ready to go on the road. The seminar can be tailored to fit your Master Gardening group and/or your time constraints. If you're interested in scheduling a presentation, please contact Elena at 715.945.3193 or polske@indianheadtel.net.

The love of gardening is a seed that once sown never dies. Gertrude Jekyll (1843-1932)

Volunteer Opportunities

Opportunities:	Project	Contact	Phone
Spooner Fish Hatchery	Shoreland Restoration	Sheri Snowbank	715-635-2101
Spooner Ag Research Station	Demo Garden	Kevin Schoessow	715-635-3506
Webster	Fort Folle Avoine Garden	Kevin Klucas	715-866-8890
Grantsburg	Community Beautification	Kris Henning	715-463-5247
Sawyer County Fairgrounds	Planting Projects	Liz Metcalf	715-462-4662
Doc Smith Park, Winter	Community Beautification	Diana Martin	715-266-2021

Don't forget about helping young and old with gardening projects. Consider working with 4-H, boys & girls clubs, church groups, or senior citizens. Share the bounty by planting an extra row of vegetables and donating it to a local food shelf or senior center. Once you've been certified, you need 24 hours of volunteer time per year plus 10 hours of continued education. You need not be a Master Gardener to volunteer!

Aliens in our backyard

Sheri Snowbank
Master Gardener



Recently while helping a crew pull up and remove five truckloads of Spotted Knapweed (*Centaurea maculosa*) from a restoration area, I had plenty of time to think about invasive species. A bit of research produced a mountain of disturbing information. Invasive plants are defined as “having been introduced into an environment in which they did not evolve and thus usually have no natural enemies to limit their reproduction and spread”. In the case of spotted knapweed it was brought from Europe or Asia as a contaminant in alfalfa or hayseed during 1890’s. It is believed they are allelopathic (a plant poisoning neighboring plants) helping them create large monoculture stands. In the West, it is has become a huge problem in the rangelands— in Colorado alone 4.7 million acres have been infested.

In 1994, the Federal Interagency Committee for the Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds (FICMNEW) reported plants classified as invasive cost the U.S. economy an estimated \$20+ billion annually. And according to Dr. Leroy Holm, University of Wisconsin, hand weeding crops remains the number one work task of 80% of the world’s population.

Here in Wisconsin we have approximately 2,100 species of plants growing outside of cultivation. Of this total, about 521 are not native to the state. At least 231 of the nonnative species are invasive in wildlands, agricultural areas, or garden settings (Kelly Kearns, Wisconsin DNR).

A recent study showed there are now over 300 species of introduced plants invading natural areas in the United States. Of this total, more than half were introduced as ornamentals. In Florida at least 45% of the invasive non-native plant species that plague their public lands were imported as ornamentals. And at least 39% of the worst invasive plant species in Florida are still commercially available for sale and continual spread (Don Schmitz, Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection).

No one is advocating that we stop gardening. In fact, most introduced ornamentals used in the yard and garden are poorly adapted for survival on their own. However, some escapees can be very aggressive and have caused serious problems nationwide. A few examples of imports that have escaped include kudzu, bamboo, pampas grass, Japanese honeysuckle, Chinese wisteria, English and German ivy, and purple loosestrife. There are even more nonnatives that have crept into our lives quietly and over such a long period of time many assume they are natives such as ox-eye daisies, tansy, butter and eggs, hawkweed, Queen Anne’s lace, and everyone’s favorite creeping Charlie.

What can we as responsible gardeners do to help?

1. Educate yourself. When selecting new plants for the garden, consider if they have heavy seed production or other invasive characteristics.
2. Don’t bring stowaways home. To prevent new infestations of weeds via nursery stock, gardeners should request sterile potting media when possible.
3. Go native. Many natives are as aesthetically pleasing as imports.
4. Read the package. Wildflower seed mixtures usually contain a certain percentage of weed seeds. Try to buy mixtures that are low in weed seed content and pull up weeds that germinate in plantings well before they go to seed.

5. Control what we can. Actively destroy local noxious weeds on your property such as bindweed, spotted knapweed, bull thistle, purple loosestrife and burdock as much as possible. It might not seem like you are making a difference, but, just remember the old saying: One year’s seeding, seven years weeding.

If you would like to learn more, check out the Wisconsin DNR website at <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/ce/invasives/> or the Federal Interagency Committee for the Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds at <http://www.ficmnew.fws.gov>. Our county and state extension staff are also great resource and are ready to help.

Sustainable landscape design workshop offered at Hunt Hill

Kevin Schoessow
Area Ag Development Agent
Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Counties

A workshop entitled “Basics of Sustainable Landscape Design” will be taught by Diana Alfuth, UW-Extension Horticultural Agent on Saturday, September 6, 2003. The workshop will be held at Hunt Hill Audubon Sanctuary, East of Sarona, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Participants in this workshop will learn how to tie together different areas of their landscapes in a visually pleasing way with minimal maintenance and maximum functionality. The workshop will help homeowners learn how to create focal points in your landscape as well as how to place and combine plants that are well suited to our climate.

The cost of the workshop is \$12 per person. The workshop will be limited to 25 participants. Pre-registration is required by calling the Spooner Area UW-Extension Office at 715-635-3506 or 1-800-528-1914.

Participants should bring sketch or graph paper, a pencil, and colored pencils.

Master Gardener training to be held this fall

Kevin Schoessow

Area Ag Development Agent

Burnett, Saawyer, & Washburn Counties

Garden enthusiasts interested in learning more about horticulture and who have an interest in volunteering in their local communities can now sign up for the University of Wisconsin-Extension fall General Master Gardener training program. Master Gardeners are members of the local community who are trained by University of Wisconsin-Extension specialists in different aspects of horticulture. The training objectives include gaining basic knowledge of plant science, fruit and vegetable growing, flowers and landscape plants, and includes topics on landscaping with native plants and backyard wildlife.

Master Gardener participants will receive 36 hours of training and are asked to provide 24 hours of volunteer community service within one year after completing the course. This volunteer time could include diagnosing plant problems, assisting 4-H and other youth groups seeking information about plants, volunteering at the county fair, helping with community or school garden projects and much more.

Classes are scheduled to begin September 23 and will continue each Tuesday evening through December 9 from 6:00-9:00 p.m. via fiber-optics, (live two-way television,). Instructors will be from the University of Wisconsin with guest instructors from the Wis. DNR and industry. Participants can choose from two sites. Training will be offered at Siren High School. The registration fee for the twelve weekly sessions will be \$100, which covers the cost of the Handbook for Wisconsin Gardeners and the Yellow Wisconsin Master Gardener Program Manual as well as electronic delivery costs, a one-year membership in the Wisconsin Master Gardener Association for each participant, and over-

head costs. If two people share the manual and handbook, the cost for the second person to attend the training is \$60.

Class size will be limited. For more information and to register call the Spooner Area UW-Extension Office at 1-800-528-1914 or 635-3506.

Ask the Experts

Each week UW-Extension staff and Specialists participate in a teleconference referred to as the Wisconsin Horticulture Update. Below are some excerpts of last week's discussions.

Phil Pellitteri: As far as the critters, this has been the week of the invading weevils. The strawberry root weevil <http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/2000/2069.html>, which is a little blackish critter, has been coming indoors. It's a harmless creature inside. It sometimes gives us problems because the grubs are root feeders.

This dry weather is starting to flare spider mite problems <http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/insect/05507.html>, especially if we aren't watering our plants from above. Fall web worm <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/wihort/gardenfacts/X1066.pdf> is in moderate populations on the ornamentals. People who have suffered gypsy moth problems are a little bit gun shy on this one and are overreacting to the problem. On a big tree, if there are one or two small areas of activity, it won't pose the tree any threat.

The dryness is starting to make me a little nervous about borer problems, both chestnut borer <http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/2000/2127.html> on oak and pines. We need to start babying these plants a little more and giving them a fair chance at fighting back against some of the insect problems.

If anyone is interested in receiving an emailed transcript of these weekly horticulture updates email Lorraine Toman at ltoman@facstaff.wisc.edu and she will forward them on to you.

Calendar of Events

August 28, 2003 Annual Horticulture Twilight Meeting, 5 p.m. - dusk, Spooner Ag Research Station Demonstration Garden.

September 6, 2003 Basics of Sustainable Landscape Design, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., Hunt Hill Audubon Sanctuary.

November 13, 2003 Annual Grape Pruning Workshop, 3:00 p.m., Spooner Ag Research Station Demonstration Garden.

Spooner Garden Club meets 4th Thursday of every month. Merle Klug (715) 635-6239.

Hayward Garden Club meets 2nd Tuesday of each month. Carol Alcoe (715) 462-3213.

Burnett Garden Club meets 2nd Thursday of each month. Ruth Anderson (715) 689-2484.

North Country Master Gardeners meets 4th Tuesday of each month. Spooner DNR Fish Hatchery. Sue Donatell (715) 635-9676.

Wisconsin Gardener TV

August 31 - 5:30 p.m. - Weep No More

August 31 - 6:00 p.m. - The Root of the Problem - NEW!

September 25 - 7:00 p.m. - Pretty Enough to Eat - NEW!

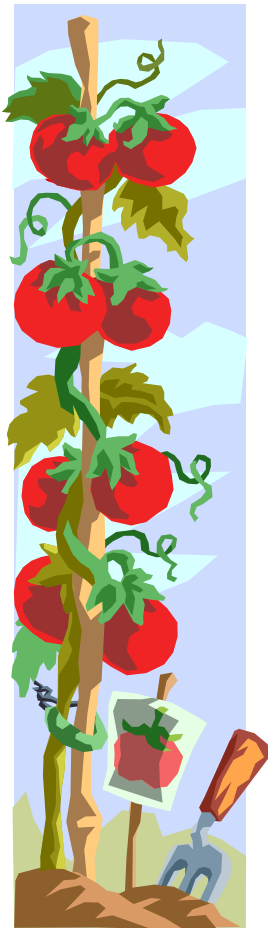
September 28 - 5:30 p.m. - Pretty Enough to Eat - NEW!

October 26 - 5:30 p.m. - Fall is For Planting and Picking

December 28 - 5:30 p.m. - Winter Interest

January 25 - 5:30 p.m. - The Winter Garden

February 29 - 5:30 p.m. - Garden Style



North Country Gardeners Newsletter

A publication for gardening enthusiasts from the
Tri-County area of Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn



EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Cooperative Extension
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University of Wisconsin Extension
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Official Business

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<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/sars/index.htm>