

# North Country Gardeners

Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Co.

UW-Extension

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## Greetings

As I'm writing this, we are being inundated by calls about the Multicolored Asian Lady Beetle, which have congregated by the thousands on some peoples homes. Another friendly or, in some cases, not so friendly reminder that fall is officially here. Fortunately these beneficial insects are harmless and need to be tolerated for only a few warm days in the fall.

As we clean up our gardens and prepare for the snow, it's a good time to reflect on what grew well and what didn't, learn from our mistakes, and make plans for next year. Every year there is a different set of challenges. At the Research Station garden, it was aster yellows and powdery mildew. Next year it will be something else. I guess that's what makes gardening so interesting.

The weather this summer was cooler then the previous two years. At Spooner we recorded 2395 growing degree units for the 2000 growing season. This compares to 2562 and 2820 degree units for the previous two years. Incidentally, the 10 year average for heat units is 2375. At Spooner, our killing frost this year was September 24, only one day later than the average. Based on past weather data, this year's growing season was pretty typical for our area.

As always I welcome your comments, suggestions, and written contributions if you have a talent for writing.

Happy Harvesting,



Kevin Schoessow  
Area Ag Development Agent

## Horticulture Updates Available on the Web

*Kevin Schoessow*  
*Area Ag Development Agent*

Each week throughout the growing season State Horticulture Specialist and Extension Agents from across the state hold ETN sessions to discuss timely topics in horticulture. These discussions include updates from around the state on weather, diseases, insects, and other timely topics. There is also a plant disease diagnostic update, and each week a featured guest speaker. These weekly hort updates are transcribed and made available on the internet and can be found at [www.uwex.edu/ces/wihort](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/wihort). Recent topics have been on composting, transplanting trees and shrubs, edible and non-edible mushrooms, new fruit cultivars, shoreland restoration, and organic farming. If you are able to get on the Internet, this is another interesting site to visit.

**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**

## Protect Tender Buds by Bud Capping

Kevin Schoessow  
Area Agricultural Development Agent



Now is the ideal time to take some steps to protect ornamental trees from deer browse. Everyone knows deer can be extremely annoying with their appetites for all kinds of ornamental plants. As winter approaches many of the summer food sources are gone and deer begin foraging other food stuffs. Fall acorns are popular this time of year, as are roadside ditches and lawns. Deer will also begin feeding on tender buds of trees. This bud feeding not only sets the tree's growth back, but it also can deform the shape of a nice tree, especially if the terminal bud is eaten.

One simple and very effective way to protect tender buds from deer browse is by putting a bud cap over them. This can be done by taking a full sheet of paper, folding it in half and then folding this half sheet over the bud to be protected. Make sure the bud is well covered so that deer can not reach into the cap and eat the bud. A few staples holds the folded paper cap in place. If done properly the bud will still grow out through the paper protection.

## Wisconsin Master Gardener Ass' Update

Kevin Schoessow  
Area Agricultural Development Agent

### *Volunteer Record Sheets*

If you have taken the Master Gardener Training in the past, you should have an extra insert in you newsletter. There are a number of changes from the State Association regarding the recording of volunteering and continuing education hours. There is also concern about personal information from a mailing list being released. For those who wish to remain active, please read the information on the record sheet, fill in your appropriate volunteer and or continued education hours, and return by **December 1, 2000 to Lorraine Toman at the Spooner Ag Research Station, W6646 Hwy 70, Spooner, WI 54801**. If you have already turned in hours to our office, we will transfer them to this new form, but be sure to sign the bottom of the form if you want your name, address, and telephone number withheld from lists that are released upon request.

If you have any questions call Lorraine at 1-800-635-3506 or 635-3506.

### *Local Master Gardener Association*

In the last newsletter, I solicited your input on future involvement as Master Gardener volunteers. Since that mailing in July, I have received six replies. Four indicated they wished to form a local Master Gardener Association, one wished to join as an individual, and one indicated interest in taking the next training. If you have not replied and wish to form a local MG Association, please call Lorraine and let her know your intentions. If there is enough interest, I will gladly help individuals set up a local/regional association. Otherwise, you can always stay active through individual membership.

## Calendar of Events

**November 7, 2000** Grape Pruning Workshop, 3:30 p.m., Spooner Ag Research Station.

**November 9, 2000** Attracting Birds to Your Home Landscape.\*

**November 30, 2000** Wreaths for the Holiday.\*

**February 1-3, 2001** Upper Midwest Fruit and Vegetable Conference, St. Cloud, MN.

**March 30-31, 2001** Wisconsin Master Gardener Association Annual Conference.

\* Sponsored by the **Burnett County Garden Club**. Call Kris Henning for details (715) 463-5247.

**Spooner Garden Club** meets the 4th Thursday of every month. Contact Merle Klug at 635-6239.

**Hayward Garden Club** meets 2nd Tuesday of every month. Contact Carol Alcoe 462-3213.

### **Brown Bag ETNs**

October 27 - Native Plant Restoration

November 17 - Nut Crops in Wisconsin

December 15 - Utilizing UWEX Media Collection for Local Professional Development Education

January 26 - Roses

### **Wisconsin Gardener TV**

October 29 - Putting the Garden to Bed

November 26 - Landscaping for Birds

December 31 - Indoor Gardening

January 28 - More Landscaping for Birds

### **Public Radio Garden Show**

Friday mornings 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. 88.3 on your FM radio dial.

## Annual Grape Pruning Workshop November 7

Kevin Schoessow  
Area Agricultural Development Agent

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 Demo Garden, Tuesday, Nov. 7, 2000 at 3:30 p.m. Dr. Bob Tomesh, UW Horticulture Specialist, will be on hand to show participants the proper pruning technique and to 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 key to grape growing in our frigid climate is variety selection and management. The grapes we grow at the Spooner Research Station are American grape varieties and fall is the ideal time to prune and prepare them for winter. Using the cane pruning technique, 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, which 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 cuttings home with them. We will continue to do this; however, we do have a limited supply.

The workshop will begin at 3:30 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 Highway 70 or ½ mile west of the Highway 70/53 interchange. Registration is not required, and there will be no charge for the public.

## Fungi: Edible and Non-Edible

Kevin Schoessow  
Area Agricultural Development Agent

The following are excerpts from the September 15, 2000 Horticulture ETN update taken from guest speaker Dr. Tom Volk, a mycologist and consultant for the Poison Center in Madison. Dr. Volk maintains a very extensive website on mushrooms and other fungi. It has about 1,000 pictures of different fungi and features a 'Fungus of the Month' feature. Many of the common questions are answered in the questions section. The web address is [www.wisc.edu/botony/fungi/volkmyco.html](http://www.wisc.edu/botony/fungi/volkmyco.html).

Some of the more common calls concerning mushrooms are whether they are edible or not. Picking wild mushrooms is a very tricky business. There are lots of edible mushrooms. There are probably 100-150 edible species in Wisconsin. There's about an equal number of mushrooms that are poisonous. The remaining 5,000-6,000 species of mushrooms in Wisconsin are neither poisonous nor edible, they are just

something in between. They may taste bad, be too tough to eat or just too bland to bother with. If people are really interested in collecting edible mushrooms, I would recommend that they contact the Wisconsin Mycological Society. This is a group of amateur mushroom hunters and professionals that go out nearly every weekend in the fall and have winter meetings about mushrooms. The group is based mostly in Milwaukee, but there are about 1,000 members throughout the state. They have a web site which can be found at [www.geocities.com/Yosemite/Trails/7331/index.html](http://www.geocities.com/Yosemite/Trails/7331/index.html).

Another common question is: How do I get rid of mushrooms in my yard? There's really not much you can do about it. There are some terrible, nasty fungicides you can spray, but they tend to do more harm than good. Fungicides can kill other beneficial fungi such as mycorrhizae. Mycorrhizae live in mutualistic associations with other plants and trees. If you try and plant a tree or most plants without the proper fungi, they will not grow very well. I tell people to find some way to enjoy the fungi in their yards.

### Gardener Profile: Get to know your fellow gardeners

*Sandy Hoecherl, Washburn County Master Gardener*

Master Gardener Sandy Hoecherl had enjoyed gardening Appleton, Wisconsin for most of her adult life. After moving to Shell Lake five years ago, she has continued to enjoy gardening, but has also needed to make some adjustments to gardening in zones 2-4 rather than 3-5. Her home on Shell Lake is the site for smaller gardens, and larger gardens are located on a farm east of Spooner. Sandy completed the Master Gardener training in Barron County and is active with the Master Gardeners in both Barron County and in the Spooner area. Her main interests are flowers and shrubs, native plantings, waterfront restoration, fruit gardens, and vegetables.

Last July, Sandy began articles on the Shell Lake website ([www.Shell-Lake.com](http://www.Shell-Lake.com)) and in the Washburn County Register. Each column focuses on a particular subject. She tries to include a local angle in each of the articles, and is always looking for ideas or for local gardeners to feature. If you have any suggestions, you can reach Sandy at 715-468-2848 or by e-mail at [hoecherl@spacestar.net](mailto:hoecherl@spacestar.net).

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## Autumn Yard and Garden Tips

Lee Daniels

UWEX Horticulture Assistant

- Fall is an excellent time to apply part if your **lawn fertilizer**. It will help promote good root growth on turf grasses before they go into winter.
- Remove diseased plants from **vegetable gardens**. Don't compost these, especially diseased tomatoes and vine crops. If you do compost these diseased plants, only use this compost around trees and shrubs.
- **Water younger trees and shrubs since moisture is very low. Give deciduous trees and shrubs one last watering and keep watering evergreens right up until ground freezes.**
- Cut back **perennial flowers** that flop in snow, spread aggressively by seed, or show signs of disease. Leave plants that add color, height, and interest to a winter garden.
- For **tender perennials**, in November when the ground is getting "crunchy" but not yet frozen, cover them with mulch after cutting them back to six inches in height.
- Dig **tender bulbs**—such as Dahlias, Elephant Ears, Begonias, and Gladiolus—and cut off stems. After drying and cleaning bulbs, discard diseased ones. Put bulbs in a plastic bag with dry peat moss, vermiculite, perlite, or wood shavings (do not put in compost or soil). Gladiolus are stored dry and uncovered. Store at 45-50°F in a dark area.
- Now is a good time to plant **hardy bulbs including garlic**.
- Put protectors on **fruit trees** to prevent rodent and rabbit damage.
- Fall bearing **raspberries** can be mowed off after leaves go.

- For summer bearing **raspberries**, canes that bore fruit this year should be removed and new ones should be thinned.
- Mulch **strawberries** about a week or so before Thanksgiving.
- If **blueberry** plants did not look thrifty (dark green, etc.) in summer, ½ cup of 10-10-10 fertilizer can be added per bush after leaves drop.
- Now is a good time of year to take **soil samples**. Lime can also be added in the fall if required.
- If you are interested in fall care and pruning of **grapes**, don't miss the grape pruning workshop on November 7 at the Spooner Ag Research Station.
- After **fruit trees** and other deciduous trees and shrubs go dormant, you may want to do some or all of you pruning before winter really sets in.

## Display Garden Update

Lee Daniels

UWEX Horticulture Assistant

Now that we've had a killing frost, it's time to summarize the results of this year's display garden. We did plant quite a few All American Selections, so, naturally, a number of varieties did quite well. However, there were some standouts that are worth noting.

If you are interested in some additions for fresh and dried flower arrangements, the Gomphrena (Globe Amaranth) 'Strawberry Fields' and 'All Color Mix' varieties, with their numerous, colorful clover-like blooms, really turned out nice. The same goes for the Verbena 'Bonariensis.' It is a nice addition to arrangements, with its many long stems with lots of small lavender flowers on the ends. For a unique flower to add to arrangements, there is the Celosia 'Flamingo Feather,' with its wheat-like 4 to 5 inch pink and white colored plumes.

For filling in areas or flower pots, etc., the petunias 'Rose Wave' and 'Purple Wave' lived up to their names. They spread out

nearly four feet and had loads of pretty three-inch flowers continuously covering them, providing waves of color.

The zinnias 'Profusion Orange,' 'Profusion Cherry,' and 'Profusion White' provided loads of pretty flowers with good disease resistance.

For those of you who noticed, we did have a bit of a disease problem in our flowers this year. Tests confirmed that it was aster yellows (see UWEX Publication A3679 *Aster Leafhopper*) most likely spread by the leafhoppers coming from nearby alfalfa fields. We'll need to watch for them next year.

In the vegetable plots, since we had a bit shorter growing season than normal due to cooler temperatures, we didn't have as many standouts as normally expected. We were like everyone else—happy if warm season crops, such as melons, squash, and tomatoes just made it to full maturity. We also had a powdery mildew problem in our vine crops, due in a large part to the numerous humid, foggy days we had (see UWEX Publication A2404 *Powdery Mildew*).

For an early watermelon, 'New Queen' (63 days) showed promise. It has a bright orange flesh, but tastes just as sweet as the red ones. For early peppers, 'Fat 'n' Sassy' (62 days) did well. The peppers had good size and nice thick, meaty flesh. For tomatoes, the 'Early Girl,' 'Big Beef,' 'German Giant,' and 'Shasta' did well. The other varieties just didn't have enough growing season this year.

The plot for USDA's research with UW examining the nutritional qualities of different colored carrot drew a lot of interest, so we are hoping to include this in next year's garden.

One final note: Mike Bertram, Assistant Superintendent for the Spooner Agricultural Research Station, does certify that the hot pepper 'Caribbean Red' is definitely one hot pepper!

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## Thyme to Grow: Lawn Care

*Sandy Hoecherl*  
Washburn County Master Gardener

It's time to fertilize the lawn for the last time this year. Recommendations call for four holiday applications: Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day and Halloween. Though this far north it is better to fertilize during the first half, rather than the last half of October. If you have neglected your lawn this year, don't neglect the fall fertilization. It helps the lawn build healthy roots and store food for the winter.

Apply one pound of nitrogen for every 1000 square feet. When possible, apply the fertilizer just before a rain or water the fertilizer into the lawn. Most lawns will need little, if any, phosphorus or potassium. Soil should be tested every three years to check on phosphorus and potassium requirements. When properly fertilized, a turf actually prevents phosphorus and nitrate runoff and leaching into water supplies.

This is also the proper time to control creeping charlie, if necessary. Creeping charlie is a perennial, broadleaf weed. It has a creeping growth habit and can rapidly spread by means of its lateral, aboveground stems (stolons) which are capable of producing roots and new plants at intervals. Maintaining a healthy lawn through proper mowing, fertilizing, and irrigation will help keep this and other weeds at low levels in lawns. When creeping charlie needs to be controlled, liquid Borax treatments can achieve moderate to good control: use 20 oz Borax in 1 gallon water per 1000 square feet. Also, many herbicide choices are available at local hardware stores and garden centers. Treat the infested area at least one foot past the perimeter of where the creeping charlie is seen, to cover the stems which are creeping out from the original plants. Apply according to instructions on the label. Best results will be seen

## Featured Publication

### *G3309 Country Acres: A Guide to Buying and Managing Rural Property*

A look at Wisconsin Agriculture from 1992 to 1997 reveals a surprising trend--part-time farmers (people whose main occupation was something other than farming) increased statewide by 22 percent.

As the country lifestyle becomes a more popular option, rural landowners--especially new ones--need information about whether or not to farm, how to use the land, and general legal and environmental considerations. **Country Acres** serves as an excellent primer for landowners who need to make these decisions.

Revised ..... 52 pages .....\$7.50

when applied after the first frost in autumn, with a second application the following spring when the creeping charlie is in bloom (small bluish-purple flowers).

After removing weeds, you may decide that the lawn needs to be re-seeded in that area. The best time to seed lawns in Wisconsin is from August 15 to September 15 but you can also seed late in November. Seeding late in the year is called dormant seeding - preparing the soil and seeding at a time of year when the seeds will not germinate and grow. This will give the grass seeds a head start over the weed seeds that germinate in the spring. For most lawns, the best grass seed is a mixture of Kentucky bluegrass and fine-leaf fescue. Prepare the lawn by removing and composting the leaves that have fallen. If you have a mulching mower, you can leave the leaves on the lawn. But if the leaves are more than two inches thick, it is better to compost them. The final mowing for the season should be a bit lower than you normally mow. This will help reduce problems with winter diseases such as snow mold.

Proper fall lawn care will save you time and energy in the spring and result in a better looking lawn.

If you have any questions or suggestions for columns e-mail [hoecherl@spacestar.net](mailto:hoecherl@spacestar.net) or call 468-2848.

## Enjoy Fall Pumpkins

*Kevin Schoessow*  
Area Agricultural Development Agent

When it comes to picking healthy choices, this member of the squash family is a great choice! Pumpkins are a good source of vitamins A & C and of potassium and fiber.

Fall is a great time to enjoy the sweet and mild taste of pumpkin. Keep in mind that two pounds of peeled, trimmed pumpkin yields about four cups when cooked.

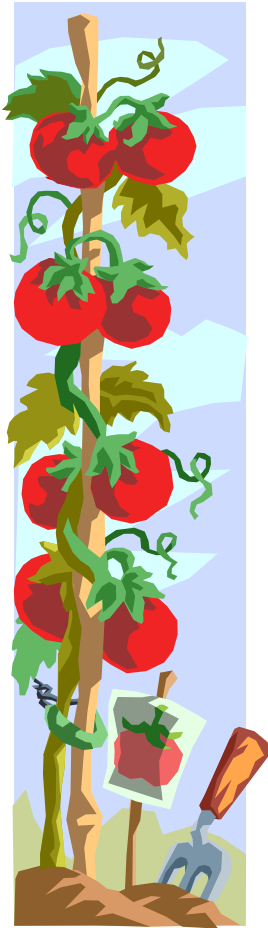


### Pumpkin Pancakes

2 eggs  
2 1/2 cups skim milk  
1 cup canned pumpkin  
3 cups biscuit mix  
1 tsp. cinnamon

Use a large bowl. Beat eggs slightly and mix in milk. Stir in pumpkin, and then add dry biscuit mix and cinnamon. Mix well. Spray large skillet with vegetable oil spray and heat to medium temperature. Cook pancakes on both sides until golden brown.

Makes 8 servings. 76 calories per serving, 4 g. fat, 79 mg. sodium, 67 mg. calcium.



# 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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Official Business

Visit us on the web! You may find this newsletter and other useful information by visiting the website of the Spooner Ag Research Station. It has recently been redesigned and updated with new factsheets and program information: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/sars/index.htm>