



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
BARRON COUNTY



MASTER
GARDENER

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EXTENSION

Growing Together

2021 Western Wisconsin Spring Garden Seminar



SAVE THE DATES: VIRTUAL PRESENTATIONS
Saturdays at 10 am

February 20, 2021 Sonya Burke
Soil Preparation for Planting Vegetables

February 27, 2021 Melinda Myers brought to you by 
Creating a Private Space <https://www.diggershotline.com/>

March 6, 2021 Laura Jull
Planting Trees and Shrubs

March 13, 2021 Kelly Povo & Phyllis Root
Searching for Wildflowers in Wisconsin and Minnesota

Cost: \$10 covers all four presentations

The Spring Garden Seminar will be presented via You Tube Live. Attendees will receive the link the week prior to each presentation. All presentations are open to the public and we welcome both new and experienced gardeners. Registration at <https://www.eauclaireaemastergardener.org/>

Brought to you by Western Wisconsin Master Gardener Associations from the following counties: Barron, Chippewa, Dunn, Eau Claire, Pierce and St. Croix



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



MASTER
GARDENER
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
DIVISION OF EXTENSION

Growing Together

Speakers for Western Wisconsin Conference



February 20, 2021

Sonya Burke

*Soil Preparation for
Planting Vegetables*

Sonya Burke has been a Hennepin County Master Gardener with the University of MN Extension Services for six years. Her love of growing things comes from a long line of gardeners and farmers on her mother's side of the family. Since moving to NE Minneapolis from "the country", she has added five gardens to her yard – mostly for natives and other perennial plants; and works with her neighbors to create pollinator corridors. She is obsessed with tomatoes and cucumbers, and wages a seemingly never-ending war with the Creeping Charlie in her flower beds.

You'll learn how to grow better vegetables by evaluating and improving your garden soil.



February 27, 2021

Melinda Myers

Creating a Private Space brought to you by
[Diggers Hotline](#)

Nationally recognized gardening expert, TV/radio host, author and columnist Melinda Myers has a master's degree in horticulture, over 30 years of horticulture experience and written over 20 gardening books. She hosts the nationally syndicated "Melinda's Garden Moment" program and The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD series. She's a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and writes a nationally syndicated newspaper column.

Learn how to combine plants, furnishings and accessories to create an entertainment space, retreat or area for relaxation within your landscape. Melinda will share strategies for maximizing beauty and enjoyment whether you're dealing with a small yard or trying to create a garden room within your landscape.



March 6, 2021

Laura Jull

Planting Trees and Shrubs

Dr. Laura G. Jull is a member of the faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Horticulture and the Wisconsin State

Extension Specialist of Woody Ornamental Horticulture. She currently teaches Identification and Culture of Woody Landscape Plants, Arboriculture and Landscape Maintenance, and Plant Propagation. Laura's extension responsibilities include serving Wisconsin's Green Industry, providing direction for statewide proactive programs, supporting county extension agents in implementing and evaluating programs, and advanced Master Gardener training.

Ensure the best possible outcome for your landscaping investment by learning how to correctly plant trees and shrubs.



March 13, 2021

Kelly Povo & Phyllis Root

*Searching for Wildflowers in
Wisconsin and Minnesota*

Kelly Povo has been a professional photographer for over 30 years and has exhibited in galleries and art shows across the country. Her photographs have been published on posters, calendars, note cards, and in books.

Phyllis Root has written over fifty books for children, including several books on bogs, prairies, old growth forest in the upper Midwest. Phyllis lives in Minneapolis and teaches in the low-residency Master of Fine Arts in Writing for Children and Young Adults Program at Hamline University in St. Paul.

Our speakers will take you on a visual journey to learn how to identify, safeguard and enjoy our native wildflowers.

Registration Information

Registrations for the Growing Together Seminar or for an individual presentation are due the week before each presentation. One \$10 registration fee includes all four presentations. Participants will receive a link the week prior to each presentation. Go to <https://www.eauclaireareamastergardener.org/> for registration. Questions can be directed to Andy Heren at Extension-Eau Claire County at 715-839-4712 or Andy.Heren@co.eau-claire.wi.us



FEB 20-21, 2021 
**REGISTER FOR A NEW VIRTUAL
EXPERIENCE**

The 28th annual Garden & Landscape Expo will be a free, virtual experience Feb. 20-21, 2021

Free online registration is available now at wigardenexpo.com.

Virtual attendees of the free event will enjoy

- **two full days of live and interactive educational sessions with experts and gardening professionals,**
- **a live vendor mall, virtual garden tours captured at the peak of the summer season,**
- **opportunities to pose questions to University of Wisconsin-Madison Horticulture Division of Extension experts in open Q&A forums,**
- **special activities for kids and families,**
- **and a beautiful garden photo competition.**

Registered participants can explore the full schedule and plan their experience.

Guests will be able to participate in the free event on their personal computers, phones and tablets.

Exhibitor Mall – One of the best parts of attending an expo is seeing and visiting with all the exhibitors. It is obvious different in a virtual format, but many exhibitors will be there virtually.

Interactive, drop-in Q&A sessions with experts from UW-Madison's Extension Horticulture Program.

Saturday, Feb. 20, 2-3:30 p.m. CDT -This session will focus on questions related to "growing ornamental plants and protecting the environment." You'll be joined by knowledgeable UW-Madison experts such as Brian Hudelson (Plant Pathology), PJ Liesch (Insects), Laura Jull (Trees and Shrubs) and Paul Koch (Turfgrass). Other ornamental horticulture experts will include Horticulture Extension Educators based throughout the state.

Sunday, Feb. 21, 2-3:30 p.m. CDT -This session will focus on questions related to "growing healthy fruits and vegetables." You'll be joined by knowledgeable UW-Madison experts such as Brian Hudelson (Plant Pathology), PJ Liesch (Insects), Julie Dawson (Vegetables), Leslie Holland (Fruit Disease) and Christelle Guedot (Fruit Insects). Other fruits and vegetable experts will include Horticulture Extension Educators based throughout the state.

**Live presenter Q&A will follow each lecture.
Watch archived videos after the live event.**

Now is the time to PRUNE many TREES and Shrubs

A Horticulture Information article from the Wisconsin Master Gardener website.

This is a great time to perform an important gardening chore: pruning. Pruning can help control the size of a plant, direct growth, influence flowering or fruiting, rejuvenate old, overgrown plants, or maintain plant health and appearance. For shrubs, pruning also encourages growth below the pruning cut. For trees, pruning can prevent safety problems from broken, diseased, dead, or dying branches.

This is a good time to prune most deciduous trees because at this time of year you can see the overall



branch structure easily, and insects and disease-causing organisms are not active. This is especially important for oak trees to help prevent spread of the fungus that causes oak wilt. Elms should not be pruned in summer either as the elm bark beetle is attracted to fresh cut wounds and can transfer Dutch elm disease.

Spirea in need of pruning.



But don't wait too long; in late winter, some trees may bleed or ooze sap excessively in the early spring. Although the bleeding may be unsightly, it is perfectly natural and is a sign that the sap is "flowing" in late winter/early spring before budbreak, but it does not harm the tree.

Some trees that bleed excessively are maple, willow, birch, walnut, beech, hornbeam, elm, and yellowwood. Newly planted trees should not be pruned unless a branch is broken, diseased or dead. Young trees (established for 2-5 years) can be pruned to encourage a well-branched canopy, but be careful not to remove more than 1/3 of the total crown at one time. Older trees should not require pruning if properly trained when young, other than to remove damaged branches. If older, large trees need pruning, it



A deciduous tree's structure is more apparent when leafless.

is best to hire an International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist to prune large trees. A list of certified arborists for hire is available at the Wisconsin Arborist Association (WAA) website (<http://www.waa-isa.org/>).



Spring-flowering shrubs, such as this small lilac, can be pruned after flowering.

Pruning continued . . .

Summer-flowering shrubs should also be pruned when they are dormant or in early spring before budbreak. These shrubs produce flower buds on new growth in the spring, so if you postpone pruning until late spring or early summer, you will remove many flower buds. Some summer-flowering shrubs include hydrangeas, roses, Japanese spirea, rose-of-Sharon, potentilla, and smokebush.



Evergreen trees generally do not need pruning, but if necessary, should be done in spring or summer.

Spring-flowering shrubs produce flower buds on one-year-old wood (wood produced the preceding summer), so it is often recommended to wait until they have flowered in spring, but before the next year's flower buds are set, though it won't harm the plant if done prior to flowering. For plants that need only moderate pruning, they can wait until after flowering. For those that are very overgrown it is better to prune in late winter/early spring. Some flower buds will be removed, but this really is the best time to prune plants. Spring-

flowering shrubs include lilacs, forsythia, viburnums, honeysuckle, chokeberry, mockorange, and weigela.

Evergreen trees such as pine, spruce, fir, Douglas-fir, and hemlock generally require little pruning, but if necessary this should be done later in the spring or summer.

The method you use to prune your plant depends on what type of plant it is and what you wish to achieve.

- Thinning preserves overall plant shape by selectively removing interior branches, down to the base of shrubs and back to larger branches on trees. This is the most commonly used technique.

- Heading back reduces the height of a shrub by removing each branch back to a larger branch or bud. Crown reduction accomplishes the same thing in trees and is much preferred over topping or tipping.

- Crown raising removes branches from the bottom of a tree to provide clearance below the branches.

- Rejuvenation restores overgrown or leggy shrubs by cutting the entire plant back to a height of 4 - 10 inches from the ground. Only certain shrubs can tolerate this, such as potentilla and spirea.

- Shearing removes new shoots to eliminate the shrub's natural form and create a specific shape for formal hedges. This is only effective on certain plants, such as yews and boxwood.



Using the right tools makes pruning easier. Tools should always be clean and sharp.

- Pinching removes shoot tips to encourage additional side branching to increase bushiness of shrubs.

Deadheading removes spent flowers by hand to encourage a second flush of flowers or remove unwanted future seedheads.

As with any other task, using the right tools produces superior results (not to mention less frustration). What implements should you be using for pruning? The choice of tool to use depends on the size of the branches and the amount of pruning to be done.

Pruning continued . . .

- Lopping shears should be used for branches up to 2 1/2 inches in diameter. They are similar to hand pruners, but have larger cutting surfaces and greater leverage.
- Pruning saws must be used to cut branches too large to handle with lopping shears. They differ greatly in handle styles, shape of the blade and type of teeth. Unlike most other saws, these are designed to cut on the “pull-stroke.”

Pole pruners are used to cut branches beyond reach. They are basically lopping shears on a long handle. Once again, the by-pass style is preferred. They should not be used near utility lines, except by qualified personnel, because of the risk of electrocution. For branches larger than 4 inches in diameter, chain saws are preferred, but they should only be used by qualified individuals.

All pruning implements should be kept clean and sharp to make pruning more efficient and easier.

— Laura Jull, Woody Plant Specialist, UW-Madison



Bow Saw



Pruning Saw with D Grip



Pruning Saw with Crescent Grip



Folding Saw



Hedge Shears



Lopping Shears



Combination Pole Saw-Pruner



Draw Cut or Scissor-Action Pruners



Anvil or Snap Cut Pruners

Resources—Where to find answers!

Factsheets—<https://pddc.wisc.edu/>

Fruit—fruit.wisc.edu

UWEX Publications—<https://learning.store.uwex.edu>

Insect Info—<http://labs.Russell.wisc.edu/insectlab/>

General Wisconsin horticulture info—<https://hort.uwex.edu>

Horticulture training and articles—<https://wimastergardener.org/articles>

Weed identification—<https://weedid.wisc.edu>

Wisconsin Pest Bulletin—<https://datcpservices.wisconsin.gov/pb/>

Scarify Seeds for Better Germination

By Carol Kettner

Seed Scarification = nicking, breaking, softening, or otherwise weakening of the seed coating meant to speed up germination.

Have you ever wondered why some seed packages recommend nicking or scratching the seeds before planting? This is called **scarification**. Most seeds can be scattered on soil or planted right out of the package, but those with very hard seed coatings will do better if you help them along. The reason they have a hard coat is to protect them from sprouting too early.

Just like a coat or jacket keeps us protected, that hard seed covering keeps seeds from germinating. Seeds covered by a thick coat can go through winter's freezing and thawing, a rainy season, or pass through an animal, and soften just slowly enough to germinate when Mother Nature says it is time.



Great Activity with Kids –

Scarify seeds in half of a package of sweet pea seeds. Plant the scarified seeds in one area, and the non-scarified seeds close by. Making sure they have the same soil, light, and water conditions, keep track of the germination rate.

Talk about why the seeds have a hard coat, and how nature scarifies seeds. (Animals chew or eat them, freezing and thawing cracks seeds, water eventually breaks the seed down.)

While most vegetable seeds are soft, many native plants and wildflowers have seeds that will germinate at a much higher rate if scarified. A few examples are morning glory, lupine, nasturtium, and sweet pea. Winter squash and bean seeds can also benefit from scarification.



Use a tweezers or needle nose pliers to hold the seed while you nick it.

How to Scarify seeds

You do not need complicated or expensive tools. A nail file, sandpaper, or a nail work well. Simply nick or scratch the seed coat so the inside shows through. **Be careful not to damage the seed inside.** Then **soak the seeds in tepid water overnight.** When the seeds start to swell, plant as soon as possible.

You want me to scare my Seeds?



Self-Seeded Annual Flowers

By Marilyn Saffert

It seems that the price of hybrid annual flowers keeps rising with each passing year, like the new fancy petunias, for example. To save some money, consider trying some self-seeding varieties in the flower garden. Annuals that self-seed give your garden a more informal, natural look. Some varieties that self-seed will be exactly like the parent plant, but many also produce unexpected colors.

When it comes to self-seeding annuals, nature does most of the work for you. This occurs through wind and seeds falling on the soil. Some annual flower seeds will remain on top of the soil under the snow until spring. Then they germinate quite freely.

Here are some common self-seeding annuals to sow for blooms year after year:

Annual poppies (papaver)
Blue larkspurs (consolida)
Cosmos
Cleome
Snapdragons (antirrhinum)
Old-fashioned petunias (petunia multiflora)
Amaranthus
Zebra mallow (malva zebrina)
Bachelor's button (centaurea cyanus)
Annual coreopsis (coreopsis tinctoria)
Forget-me-nots (cynoglossum)

The downside to some of the self-seeders is that they can spread throughout areas you do not expect and can even become a nuisance. Think ahead about where you don't mind how much they weave their way through a bed, and make sure you are not encouraging a plant on an invasive list. Check this site for those listed in Wisconsin - <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Invasives>.

HINTS:

- The seeds need to fall on bare soil and will not germinate on mulch.
- Learn the appearance of the new leaves so you don't pull or hoe them out.



Zebra Mallow – *malva zebrina*

One of the easiest self-sown plants. The small leaves will start popping out of the soil in early summer, and within no time at all, they will produce hollyhock-like purple striped flowers on plants 3-8 feet tall. New plants will continue to emerge in that area of the garden producing new flowers all summer long.



Old Fashioned Petunias – *petunia multiflora*

Ordinary old-fashioned petunias will happily self-seed. These are not the "wave" or other hybrid versions. They will most likely not be the same color as the parent plant but will fill in a spot year after year.

Gardening Terms 2—By Carol Kettner



The more garden vocabulary you know, the easier it is to understand plant labels, and to describe a problem when you ask for their help.

Chlorosis – a condition in which leaves do not produce enough chlorophyll. As chlorophyll is responsible for the green color of leaves, chlorotic leaves are pale, yellow, or almost white.

Companion Planting - Planting different plants together that benefit one another. For example, sowing a plant that attracts pollinators next to a plant that requires pollination.

Cultivar - A species that was selected or bred by humans for a particular feature. Cultivars carry a specific name in addition to the scientific name and/or common name. For example, "Brandywine" is a tomato cultivar.



Determinate - Describes tomatoes that stop growing when fruit begins forming from the topmost flower bud, making them more compact at around 3'-4'. Most of the crop ripens within a couple weeks' time, making these a great choice for canning.

Indeterminate - Describes tomato varieties that continue to grow and produce tomatoes all season until first frost: therefore, you can find tomatoes at all stages on the plant at one time.

Days To Emerge

Number of days, on average, that it will take a seedling to emerge from the soil or medium in favorable conditions.

Days To Harvest

Number of days from sowing (or transplant) to harvest.

Deadheading - Cutting spent flowers off a plant, encouraging the plant to bloom again, extending the bloom period.

Drought Tolerant - Ability to survive or thrive in low water conditions. Also known as "water-wise."

Frost Sensitive -Plants that are not frost tolerant and will die as a result of exposure to freezing temperatures.

Germination - The moment when a seed begins to grow.

Hardening Off - The 7 to 10-day process of acclimating plants started indoors to outdoor conditions.

Scarification - The process of breaking through a hard outer covering of a seed to allow moisture to penetrate. Some seed packages, such as morning glories and sweet peas, will recommend nicking or scratching a seed for better germination.

Stratification - The process of subjecting seed to a moist and cold treatment to break dormancy, which occurs naturally when seed is sown outdoors in the fall and experiences a winter period.

Thinning - The act of reducing extra seedlings so that remaining plants are spaced properly.

Note to Barron County Master Gardener Volunteers

Our monthly meetings resumed via Zoom on February 11. Hopefully we will work out all the kinks so that we can offer our meetings to the public again soon.

In the meantime, please pay attention to your emails for the online meetings and other information regarding Master Gardener Volunteers.

Check the wimastergardener.org website and don't forget to enter your education hours as you complete them. Call Kim Grover at the Extension office if you have questions.

715 537 6256



Proven Winners for 2021

Double Up Red Begonia—These plants are versatile working in both sun or shade, which makes them a wonderful unifying plant to use in both sun and shade beds. Unlike older begonias, these are quite vigorous. They can tolerate some drought conditions, but will look their best with more consistent moisture and regular feeding. They love the heat and are self cleaning so the plants look very clean. They do not need to be deadheaded to bloom all summer long. What's not to love!

Double Delight Blush Rose Begonia These begonias prefer moist but not wet, well draining soil. These are not hardy, but the corms can be dug up, stored for the winter and replanted the next spring.

A spectacular new lightly fragrant variety of begonia which makes the ideal hanging basket plant. It produces an abundance of scented double flowers in shades of pink during the summer months.

Bright Lights Red African Daisy—Deadheading not necessary for continuous bloom. Plants will "bury their dead" (new flowers will quickly cover old flowers) so no deadheading necessary. Bright Lights Osteospermum do not like having wet feet and will react badly to constantly wet soil. Be sure to allow soil in containers to get dry on top before watering and only plant Bright Lights in ground beds with good drainage. While it shouldn't be necessary you can trim your plants with a sharp pair of scissors or pruning shears at any time.

Baby Kim Lilac—Yes, you have space for a delightfully fragrant lilac! Baby Kim lilac is our smallest lilac to date, but boy, does it pack in a lot of flower power.

Enjoy glossy, dark green foliage, an abundance of fragrant purple blooms that don't fade to white, and a useful rounded habit that fits into just about any sunny spot. It brings all the joy of lilacs into a neater, tidier package so you can enjoy this classic flowering shrub no matter how much - or how little - space you have.



Double Delight™ Blush Rose - Begonia

Dolce® 'Toffee Tart' - Coral - Heuchera hybrid—Thrives in part shade but will grow in full shade. Plant in humus-rich, well-drained soil. Trim back tattered foliage in early spring. Salt tolerant. Get a new color for your shade garden! Newest leaves are amber, and will mature to ginger during the summer. Creamy white flowers.



Dolce Toffee Tart - Coral Heuchera

Heaven Scent' - Jacob's Ladder—The perfect companion for Hosta! Green, fern-like leaves have purple highlights. Fragrant, blue flowers are produced in loose clusters in spring. Grows best in cool, moist environments with well-drained soil. Provide afternoon shade in southern regions. Keep plants watered during hot spells.

Superbells® Coral Sun - Calibrachoa—Abundant, small petunia-like flowers all season on cascading growth, no deadheading necessary. When planting Calibrachoa I often give the plants a slight trim, using a sharp pair of scissors or pruning shears.

While not a necessary step, it will increase branching and may help your plants look even fuller. Calibrachoa are usually easiest to grow in containers. If the roots are kept too wet it can lead to root rot diseases. In containers, allow the top of the soil to dry before watering again. If your plant is wilting even though the soil is still damp you likely have a root rot problem.

Proven Winners for 2021 Continued . . .

Berried Treasure® Pink - Strawberry - Double the Delight! Why choose between growing flowers or

fruit? This wonderful plant is both highly ornamental and it produces tasty fruit on ever-bearing plants. The semi-double flowers are gorgeous in their own right and lip-smacking sweet strawberry together all summer. It's a little like having your cake and eating it too. Planting in a container will show off the fruit to best effect, but it can also be grown in gardens. Short runners can develop over time, which may add a trailing element to the plant. These runners can be

trimmed back, if you prefer to do so or can be left as is. The 12-16" tall,

mounding plants are just the right size for your patio pots or hanging baskets. They will flower and produce fruit the season they are planted if you buy plants or start seeds indoors, which means the plant can be grown as an annual. However, they are also quite hardy and will be perennial in zones 4-9.

Crusader Hawthorn—In addition to its abundant white floral display in late spring, attractive silver bark, colorful fall foliage, and showy fruit, this thornless native hawthorn tolerates just about any challenge you can give it. It shrugs off wet and dry soils, is not fussy about pH levels, is unbothered by clay or salt, and resists the many diseases that often plague the rose family. Pruning should be done cautiously, with a light hand. Excessive pruning can stunt its growth. If you wish to shape or remove crossing branches, do so



Berried Treasure Pink—Strawberry

in wintertime when it's dormant. Grows well in most soil types, but prefers those that are moist and well-draining.

ColorBlaze® Royale Pineapple Brandy™ - Coleus -Good looks AND personality. This jazzy new Coleus for sun and shade features yellow to chartreuse luminescent foliage with accents of burgundy bronze, forming a very well-branched plant that works well in landscapes and containers. Like all ColorBlaze® Coleus, it is bred to take the heat and bloom very late in the season, if at all, extending its garden performance into the fall. Many people feel that coleus look best before they flower. We have worked hard to choose coleus that bloom late in the season or not at all. To keep foliage in top shape, pinch off the blooms as they appear if

you wish.



The Price is Right—Coneflower

Color Coded® 'The Price is White' - Coneflower - Grow in sunny and hot locations with well-drained soils. Tolerates light shade, but best performance is in full sun. Drought tolerant once established. does not tolerate wet soil, do not allow to stay wet for long periods of time. Provide 24 hour lighting to bulk up plants, if necessary. It is best to bulk plants until 3 to 4 shoots are present for the highest quality plants. Provide long days, 13 to 16 hours a day, for flower production. Night interruption lighting is also effective. Once established use cool temperatures to keep compact. Echinacea is a long day plant and will not flower until the day length is correct. The primary benefit of vernalization in Echinacea is that the plants will bloom faster.



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
BARRON COUNTY



FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER 2021

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Encourage, foster,
support, and promote
horticulture for all
Master Gardener
Volunteers and residents
of Barron County and to
promote the UW-

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - EXTENSION

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Requests for reasonable accommodations for disabilities or limitations should be made prior to the program or activity for which it is needed. Please do so as early as possible prior to the program or activity so that proper arrangements can be made. Requests are confidential (ADA requirements.)