



#### SUMMER 2023 NEWSLETTER

This quarter's newsletter is OVERFLOWING with educational articles, upcoming events, photos from past events, and more! Thank you one and all who contributed—you make this job a delight!

The next newsletter deadline is October 1, 2023. If you have a special gardening project, interest, upcoming event/flyer or learned a new skill — please share it with us. Submit your article (and photos if you have them) *in Word format* for the Fall Newsletter to Theresa Roush at [roush4Jesus@gmail.com](mailto:roush4Jesus@gmail.com).

Dig in! Theresa

## THE SEASON WILL BE UPON US

Submitted by Elaine Whitfield

You may be wondering what season I'm referring to. We have entered Summer, Autumn is many weeks away, and let's not even think of Christmas, please. The season I've dreaded for nearly all the years of my life is "Ragweed season". Yes, this prolific native plant (there are actually two species in Indiana) will be producing it's less than attractive flowers and flinging about one billion grains of pollen per plant into the air. This annual herbaceous celebration will start around the middle of August and continue unabated until the first frost.



*Common Ragweed (Ambrosia artemisiifolia)*

It is estimated that around 50% of those who suffer from some type of allergy, have the sensitivity to Ragweed. As I mentioned earlier, we have both *Ambrosia artemisiifolia* and *Ambrosia trifida* here in Indiana and most of North America. Ironically, "Ambrosia" comes from a Greek word that means "food of the gods". What was Carl Linnaeus thinking when he assigned it that lovely name? Some research gave me the answer; *Ambrosia* species provides high quality food for many insects, birds and mammals.

As bizarre as this may sound, the two species of *Ambrosia* were the first plants I learned to identify. I was three years old when I experienced my first ragweed season. By the time I was five, living on a farm, I could recognize both plants. My parents made sure of that. I was not especially popular with adults who pointed at Goldenrod, called it Ragweed and blamed it for their allergy symptoms. They didn't appreciate being questioned and corrected by some pint-size know-it-all. If looks could have killed, I would never have made it to my teen years.



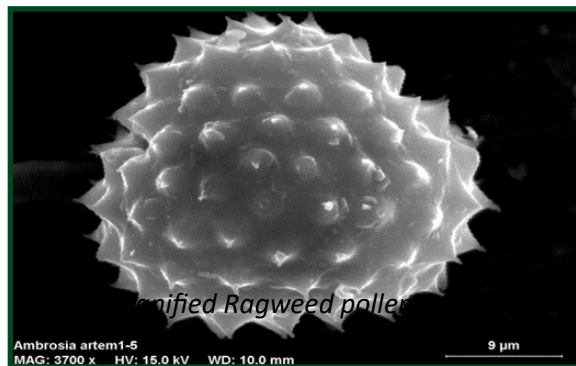
*Giant Ragweed (Ambrosia trifida)*

*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*, aka Common Ragweed, is the shorter of the two species at approximately two to three feet tall. It prefers dry, sunny, disturbed areas but is very adaptable to all kinds of soil and conditions, generally growing in colonies. It has opposite basal leaves but they become alternately arranged toward the top of the plant. The flowers lack any apparent petals or sepals and are grouped into drooping clusters on a spike. The pollen is very light-weight and easily released to the wind. Different sources site pollen travelling various distances but suffice it to say 200 to 400 miles is a reasonable estimate depending, on the weather conditions. Conversely, the unjustly accused Goldenrod pollen is sticky and clings to insect bodies.

*Continued next page ...*

*...Continued from previous page*

The physical laws of nature tell me that Goldenrod pollen is incapable of making that kind of journey. Because the pollen of ragweed doesn't stay put, few pollinators visit the plant. However, there are some insects that specifically suck the juices of the plant, including stink bugs, aphids, leafhoppers and many more. Those that actually eat the plant include beetle larvae of many groups, larvae of leaf mining flies and caterpillars of certain moths. The ragweed flower moth (*Schinia rivulosa*) eats the flowers and several species of grasshoppers eat the foliage. The seeds produced are eaten by northern bobwhite, wild turkeys, sparrows, doves, finches, mice, ground squirrels and voles. Cattle and livestock cannot eat this plant; it will cause them to become nauseated.



Giant Ragweed is not very ornamental but grows in colonies in floodplains helping to bind the soil. Along with other plant communities, it helps prevent erosion and filters contaminants out of water. This improves the quality of our waterways by limiting the runoff of fertilizers, pesticides and silt.

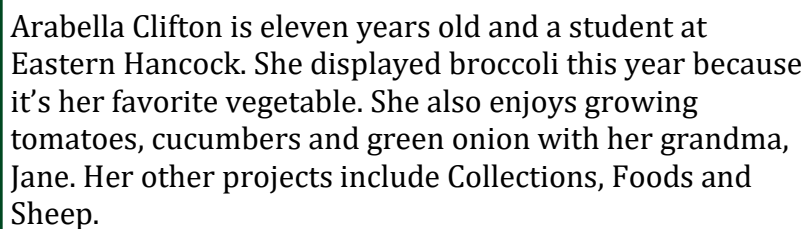
In August and September, it will be hard for me (and millions of other ragweed allergy

sufferers) to remember that these plants serve an important role in our environment. However, I have to give them credit for being the catalyst for my interest in identifying plants and becoming a Master Gardener.





The Hancock County Master Gardeners Awards Chairperson Lynn Meier presented \$250 checks to the Grand Champion Vegetable winner, Bella Clifton, and the Grand Champion Flower winner, Ty Kihlstrum.



Tyelar Kihlstrum is fourteen years old and a student at Eastern Hancock. He displayed a spiller, thriller, filler arrangement featuring Hawaiian Ti, Cordyline fruticosa. Ty participates in many projects, with some of his favorites being Tractor Maintenance, Sports Fishing, Model Rocketry and Herbs.







HCMGA Members and Friends,

I would like to thank all those who participated in our Green Thumb event, “Indiana’s Keystone Plants”. We had 32 attendees and over 20 master gardeners learning from Lais and all the education stations. Lais did a wonderful job imparting the information about a rather complex subject on the relationship between certain native plants and insects, animals and humans. I received nothing but positive feedback on her ability as a speaker and the interesting information she imparted. This information was new to many who attended.

I want to give a special recognition to our sponsors, Kyle Turpin, Marketing Manager HC Public Library and Cindy Newkirk, District Administrator and Educator from S&WCD. I so appreciate your help. Also Co-Alliance manager, Cathy Logan was so generous with giving us prizes for our 20 questions game.

Thanks to CISMA coordinator, Pat McCartney and SICIM representative, Stephanie Schuck for giving us information about identifying and eradicating invasive plants. A new partner was also in attendance, friends from the Lower Big Blue Basin Project, thanks to Sara Peel.

We will be setting a date soon for a fall 2023 Green Thumb event. Information will be coming your way soon about how we can make this another great learning opportunity.

Regards from a daisy masquerading as a sunflower :)

Vicki Snarr  
HCMGA  
Education Chairperson

## Outdoor Women's Day at Big Oaks

Submitted by Marsha Burkhardt &  
Teresa Bowlby

Saturday, June 10, 2023 was quite an adventure day for us as we attended the Outdoor Women at Big Oaks day at Jefferson Proving Ground close to Madison, Indiana. This is a day of classes and comradery for women who want to learn more outside skills. When you enroll, you rank the classes you'd like to take in order of 1-10. You are then assigned to 4 of those. We were assigned Mushrooms: The Fungus Among Us for our first class and this was led by Professor Darrin Rubino of Hanover College. His exuberance for his subject was quite contagious. He furnished us with dried specimens and magnifying loops with which to see the beautiful detail in the once living fungus.



We then took a hike in the woods and before long all were digging and turning over logs and branches to find more specimens. Even though the dry weather had impacted the woods, he pointed out samples such as Dead Man's Fingers and Chicken of the Woods. He shared with us a number of wild flowers along the way also.



In one of our other classes, we were quite lucky that we were the only ones that were in the class and our instructor was Dawn Slack, project coordinator for Indiana Invasives Initiative. What an awesome, personalized class! We again took a hike in those beautiful woods and this time we were introduced to even more native wild flowers and trees and the invasive species impacting those woods.

*Continued next page ...*



*...Continued from previous page*



Dawn explained how she did a survey of a property and then produced a plan for remediation. She further explained how she determined the most important area in which to start. Among her handouts was a fantastic small binder of Indiana invasive plants and a sheet which details which herbicide to use and

when and what percentage of dilution is needed. Of note also is the fact that she works very closely with Helen Steussy, M.D. of New Castle. When she finds an area that needs a Weed Wrangle, she communicates with Dr. Steussy and they then coordinate the workers.

Our last class of the day was with Kirsten Carlson, also a professor of biology at Hanover. Some of you may recognize her as the Monarch lady. She led a class in Landscaping for Wildlife. In this session, we examined the levels of needs for wildlife and how we can help them along the way. Her session began with a story of chickadees and how they manage through the cold winters when they weigh only as much as two nickels. Professor Carlson had us think about our own properties and how we could change them to accommodate wildlife better and reduce our human impact in their world by plantings and ecologic concern. Simply by reducing mowing and removal of leaves, many species of wildlife would prosper.

At the end of the day, we were tired but considerably more informed having participated in these classes. This is a yearly event on the first Saturday in June for ladies only (sorry, fellows!). That said, OWBO is always looking for presenters.



## Pennsy Trails Workday

Submitted by Mary Ann Wietbrock & Darlene Trusty

Here are photos from our Pennsy Trails workday as we plant 10 viburnum's donated by the Hancock Co MG. These were planted and watered well along the newest Pennsy Trail section along a fence at 100S, close to 500W. The Pennsy Trails now connects 400W to 600W. This trail section is now opened and has been enjoyed by many trail users this past week. More info on this project and volunteer opportunities at [Www.PennsyTrails.org](http://Www.PennsyTrails.org) as we work to connect to 150W in Greenfield. There are 2.5 miles to go to close the gap. Contact us on our website to join this Hancock Co Master Gardener committee.



## Happy Gardening

Submitted by Jackie Reeves

Gardening is a pastime meant for anyone, at any age. It's healthy, beautiful, and rewarding. Intuitively we know that being drawn to the outdoors is good for our physical and mental health. We tend to breathe deeper when outside. This helps to clear out the lungs, improves digestion, improves immune response, and increases oxygen levels in the blood.

Spending time outdoors has been shown to reduce heart rate and muscle tension. Sunlight lowers blood pressure and increases vitamin D levels.

A routine period in the garden can be a good form of exercise. Whether tending to or just moving about in a garden, it provides structure to our day and is linked to improved mental health. According to research, getting our hands in the soil triggers the release of serotonin in the brain.

Gardening routines, like watering and weeding mimics whole body exercise and can create a soothing rhythm to ease stress. Hence, when we are gardening, our brain produces endorphins which result in the same kind of euphoria that one feels

when we are working out. In turn, we are lowering our stress levels and may be very gratified to be able to continue to plant, tend, harvest, and share food with others.

Having any degree of outdoor space is a treat. Give yourself the gift of enjoying your garden even more this year by considering:

- \* fun and unusual surfaces, solar powered lights, and places to sit
- \* bird feeders, chimes, or bamboo clackers
- \* a water feature that has consistent gurgling or trickling sounds to sooth the mind
- \* including plants with pleasing scents and interesting textures
- \* choosing foliage or flowers that have a visual appeal all

season long or find those that change significantly throughout multiple seasons.

- \* adding citronella votive candles for a candlelit vibe at night that also keeps pesky bugs at bay!

Growing new plants for a healthy ecosystem, adding a fantasy feature, or adopting a potted plant of exotic color will bring your gardening experience to a higher level of delight.





# SAVE THE DATE!



## 2023 PURDUE EXTENSION MASTER GARDENER STATE CONFERENCE

# Back Together Again

**October 6-7, 2023**

**PURDUE CAMPUS • West Lafayette, Indiana**



More information at  
<https://bit.ly/2023EMGStateConf>

An Equal Access/Equal Opportunity University



Dear Purdue EMG Coordinators and Volunteers,

The Purdue Extension Master Gardener Program is pleased to announce the 2023 Purdue EMG State Conference to bring us back together to enjoy learning and interacting with fellow Extension Master Gardeners from all parts of Indiana!

We hope Purdue EMG's will mark their calendars for October 6-7, 2023 to come together once again on the Purdue University campus in West Lafayette, IN.

Please share this information with fellow Purdue EMG volunteers!

Check this webpage for details as they become available: <https://bit.ly/2023EMGStateConf>

Thank you for all you do as a Purdue EMG volunteer or Coordinator!

All the best,

John Orick

*Purdue Extension Master Gardener State Coordinator*

Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture



## Springhurst

Submitted by Lynn Meier

The first Monday of each month at 3:00 pm, these 4 ladies can be found at Springhurst Campus presenting a program to their residents. There are usually 8 to 12 residents in attendance.

For the month of June, they chose to do a hands on event of planting flowers in unusual containers. Flower containers were purchased at GW (Goodwill Store) and ranged from a Mickey Mouse basket to beautiful pink patent leather shoes, tennis shoes and old work boots. The residents chose their flowers purchased at Walmart. With a little bit of soil, water and these ladies' helping, the residents made their flower pot. It was a great time by everyone.

The planters were then moved to the main patio off of the dining room. They look amazing in their garden.

Shown are Vicki Snarr (far left), Lynn Meier, Connie Dickinson, and Peggy Robertson



# THE TREASURE OF TREES

## GREEN THUMB EVENT

AUGUST 12, 2023

9:30 AM - 3:00 PM

**LEARN HOW TO PICK, PLANT,  
PRUNE, AND PROBLEM-SOLVE!**

- Lais McCartney, ANR Educator Purdue Extension
- Brian Gandy, Professional Forester
- Michael Bane, Professional Forester
- Andrew L. Sargent, ISA Certified Arborist and ISA Risk Assessment Qualified

Hancock County Public Library, Community Room  
900 W. McKenzie Rd, Greenfield, IN 46140

PRESENTED BY:



LUNCH PROVIDED BY:

*HANCOCK COUNTY SOIL & WATER, CONSERVATION DISTRICT*





## DIY SEED BOMBS

Submitted by Lynn Meier

### Supplies:

4 pieces of colored paper or newspaper, shredded

2 cups of hot water

Strainer, old T-shirt, sponge

Blender

Seeds

zinnia, cosmos, poppy, larkspur, bee balm, black-eyed Susan and wildflowers for your area. You want annuals and perennials that require little attention that provide seeds and nectar for wildlife.

### **How to Make the Bombs**

Shred your paper into small pieces into a large bowl. Mix well with hands. Place all the paper into the blender. Add two cups of hot water and let stand for 10 minutes. Make sure the paper is completely covered. You may need to add a little



Seed bombs have been used for thousands of years by farmers. It became popular again in 1973 when Liz Christy formed her Green Guerrilla group in the Bowery Houston area of New York. They transformed a derelict private lot into a garden. The space is still cared for by volunteers but now enjoys the protection of the city's parks department. Guerrilla gardening is a planting technique used by gardeners around the world to fulfill various intentions. Some people guerrilla garden to provide a living space for pollinators that wouldn't otherwise be able to thrive in urban areas. Some of the more common seeds used are alyssum, lobelia, butterfly milkweed, scarlet sage, sunflower, basil, cilantro, lettuce, tomatoes,

more water. Turn on blender and run until you have pulp. Place an old T-shirt into the strainer, put the pulp in the strainer. Add 3 tsps. of seed to the pulp. Using the T-shirt, squeeze all the liquid from the pulp. Form a ball of pulp in your hands or place in a cookie cutter form if you wish. Squeeze any additional liquid from the pulp by pushing a sponge on the pulp. Let dry overnight. Now they are ready to use. Place bombs in the area you wish to have your plants. Resource I found very helpful is Guerrilla Gardening.org

Photo Caption: Created with different colored paper. Needs to be light weight paper. The large one is made from newspaper with food coloring added. It's the best paper to use because it decomposes easier than all others. Paper towels work well too.



## A Little Bit Goes A Long Way

Submitted by Jackie Reeves



Volunteering for an hour of your time to plant a flower may not seem like a lot to you, however it may mean the world to many unknown to you. At the recent event, Planting Flowers Downtown Greenfield, many new and seasoned gardeners planted lots of beautiful plants in less than an hour. The weather was perfect, the materials were close to the container, and the instructions were relevant to safe and successful planting.

Sound too good to be true? It gets even better when you are offered gloves, have raised containers, a simple planting map, soft dirt, gardening buddies, and support should it be needed. As I finished planting the last plant, empty containers were magically gathered up, and I walked away feeling a sense of pride in my community and fellowship with others who wanted the same. For less than an hour, we planted flowers that will bring a bit of color to folks all summer long.



And if any of you would want to pitch in and volunteer occasionally when they are dead-heading flowers, especially during the hottest part of the year (mid-July through mid-September), just let Paul know ([paulenorton3@gmail.com](mailto:paulenorton3@gmail.com)).



## Garden Walk

Submitted by Janet Ridenour

June 24th Elaine Whitfield and Janet Ridenour attended the Garden Walk presented by Delaware County Master Gardener Association. We visited 4 of the 7 gardens. All had plein aire painters on site.

We started at the Rose Tranquility Garden. They had several ideas we think could be used in our Demo Gardens. A cute little greenhouse, the organized pallet garden cleanup area and cattle panel arbors connecting raised beds.

Next was the Peaceful Koi Pond. The homeowner was very knowledgeable about both koi and ponds.

The Bluebird Cottage Garden in Yorktown was amazing! The homeowner was a Master Gardener and had multiple garden areas in both her front and back yard. She incorporated trees, native perennials, annuals and vegetables. She had several bluebird boxes and said she had already had two groups of bluebirds fledge this year.

We ended our tour with the Country Garden. There were sun and shade gardens at this site. There were raised beds with garlic growing to keep deer out of her vegetables. It was a beautiful peaceful setting with horses.

All the Delaware County Master Gardeners were friendly and knowledgeable. We are hoping to have a tour of our Demonstration Gardens and got some good ideas from Delaware County







**Master  
Gardeners**  
HELPING OTHERS GROW

# FALL PLANT SALE!!

## WHAT TO EXPECT

- ✓ Fall Annuals
- ✓ Perennials
- ✓ Live Demonstrations
- ✓ Master Gardeners to answer questions
- ✓ Cash and Card accepted



**SEPT  
8-9**



**SEPT 8: 8 AM TO 6 PM  
SEPT 9: 8 AM TO 3 PM**

Hancock County Fairgrounds  
4H Show Arena  
620 N Apple Street  
Greenfield, IN 46140

Purdue University is an equal access/equal opportunity/affirmative action organization.





# *Gardening Yoga*

## HANCOCK COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS

### FACEBOOK

<https://www.facebook.com/hancockmga>

### WEBSITE

<https://hancockmga.com/>

### MONTHLY MEETING

4th Thursday of the month in-person (at 792 E. Park Ave, Greenfield, IN) or

Zoom (to register: [meier\\_lynn@yahoo.com](mailto:meier_lynn@yahoo.com)).

### MASTER GARDENER TRAINING

<https://hancockmga.com/become-a-master-gardener/>