

# Green Pages

A newsletter for people interested in horticulture and  
natural resources in Western Wisconsin

August 2014

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## FROM THE DESK OF THE HORTICULTURE EDUCATOR

As a horticulture educator, many people think I know every bug, flower, tree, shrub, vegetable variety, and vermin control. The truth is... I learn something everyday! Including the insect shown in the picture to the right. It was found eating potato plant leaves. I'd never seen it before in all of my career. PJ Liesch an Assistant Faculty Associate



Taken by Erin LaFaive 2014

with the University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Entomology helped identify it as margined blister beetle. Apparently, before Colorado potato beetle was prevalent this critter was the main insect pest of potatoes. It's even called the "old-fashioned potato beetle".



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## Wild & Bur Cucumber by Mark Renz

Now is the time of year when we start to notice vines climbing trees, crops, and even structures. While Wisconsin has over 50 plants categorized as vines, bur (*Sicyos angulatus* L.) and wild (*Echinocystis lobata* (Michx.) Torr. & A.Gray) cucumber are two of the most common found in Wisconsin. If you see a vine that has small white flowers in August, chances are that it is one of these two species. While many characteristics are present to differentiate between the two, the easiest is to look at the leaves, as they are quite distinct. See below for pictures from the Arlington Agriculture Research Station taken in Late July of this year.



Both are native annuals fairly well distributed throughout the state. While these germinate in late April to early May (seedlings look very similar to cucumber seedlings), they are usually not identified until they produce small white flowers (July-August) when vines are over 10 feet in length. Vines typically are intertwined in other plant material, making it extremely difficult to remove the entire vine. If possible, look for where the vine attaches to the soil and pull/cut the stem at this point. The remaining tissue will die as its supply from the roots has been severed. Several herbicides are also effective, but make sure the plant it is wrapped around is tolerant to the herbicide you plan to use.

If seen in an agricultural setting I recommend managing this plant before it produces seed as these will require management in future years. If in natural or non-crop areas, admire it as unique native vegetation of Wisconsin.

For more information about wild cucumber and some great photos see: [wimastergardener.org/?q=WildCucumber](http://wimastergardener.org/?q=WildCucumber)

Mark Renz, Extension Weed Specialist, UW-Madison



# PRAIRIE DAYS

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2014 FROM 10 A.M. TO 4:30 P.M.

## MORNING: THREE CONCURRENT SESSIONS

### 10:00 – 12:00 PLEIN AIR IN THE PRAIRIE

*Jean Accola*

— Bring your preferred art supplies.  
We'll supply the beautiful site.

### 10:00 – 11:00 CREATING SWAGS FROM NATIVE PLANTS

*Faye Jones*

### 10:00 – 11:00 PRAIRIE AND SAVANNA REMNANTS OF THE LOWER CHIPPEWA RIVER

*Bill Hogseth*

### 11:15 – 12:15 GARDENING WITH NATIVE PLANTS

*Douglas Owens-Pike*

### 11:15 – 12:15 SOIL: THE HIDDEN WORLD BENEATH THE PRAIRIE

*Matt Kuchta*

## AFTERNOON: GENERAL SESSION FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS

*Starting in the Schoolhouse*

### 12:30 – 1:15 POT LUCK LUNCH

— in the Simply Dunn  
Schoolhouse, bring a dish to pass

### 1:15 – 2:15 BIRDS OF THE GRASSLANDS

*Steve Betchkal*

### 2:15 – 3:00 USING THE COEFFICIENT OF CONSERVATISM TO IDENTIFY PRAIRIE REMNANTS

*Bill Hogseth*

### 3:00 – 3:30 TRAVEL TO PRAIRIE

### 3:30 TO 4:30 GUIDED WALK IN THE PRAIRIE

*Paula Kleintjes-Neff, Mark  
Leach and Bill Hogseth*

— An insect exploration for kids  
and botanical identification



## THIS IS A FREE PUBLIC EVENT

held at Simply Dunn, E4606  
County Rd. C, Menomonie, WI  
and nearby native prairies.

[www.simply-dunn.com](http://www.simply-dunn.com)



## Contact:

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715-664-8368

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*In case of rain, many sessions  
will be held indoors.*



## Gardening Tips

Sharon Morrissey, Consumer Horticulture Agent, University of Wisconsin-Extension in Milwaukee Co.

- In August, gardening becomes a struggle between the gardener and the heat, humidity, drought, plant pests, and the mosquitos.
- A thick layer of organic mulch over the root zones will go a long way to discouraging weeds while preventing moisture loss. That means less weeding and watering for the gardener. It also means less angst for our plants.
- The last date to sow sweet corn for the year is August 1st.
- For late crops of beets, bush beans, carrots, Chinese cabbage, cucumbers, kohlrabi, and onion sets, continue sowing seeds until August 15th. Peas and collards can be seeded again now, too.
- Aphids can continue to show up all season long. Dislodge them with a strong blast of water or use insecticidal soap (not dish soap) when first noticed.
- Continue controlling striped and spotted cucumber beetles which spread bacterial wilt to cucumbers, squashes, melons, and gourds. Weekly dusts or sprays of rotenone, carbaryl (Sevin) or permethrin (Eight) are effective but only if insects are present. Apply late in the day after flowers close and bees are not present. Remove infected, wilted plants immediately.
- Colorado potato beetle adults are back for a second generation. Since these distinctive, globular, yellow and black striped insects are so easily seen they can either be removed by



- hand or sprayed. A specific strain of Bt is effective against these beetles while they are still young. The insecticide carbaryl (Sevin) can also be used.
- After the last raspberry harvest for the year, prepare for next year while also avoiding diseases by pruning out old flowering canes leaving only 3-4 young canes per foot of row. Wait until spring to prune back shoot tips.
- Watch for the appearance of fall webworm webs on limbs of trees and shrubs. Cut out the tents or spray while the larvae inside are still young using the biological insecticide Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) sold as Dipel, Thuricide, or Bactur. Once the larvae are over 1 inch long control is not effective or necessary.
- Avoid pruning trees and shrubs since doing so this late in the season can stimulate new growth that will not harden off in time for the cold winter weather ahead. Delay pruning until the end of the dormant season early next spring. Late in the season when trees and shrubs are going dormant, wounds heal very slowly. Tender wound tissue can also be killed by freezing temperatures. Harvest vegetables such as tomatoes and melons regularly and frequently to avoid overripe fruit which attracts picnic beetles.






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## Gardening Tips

Sharon Morrissey, Consumer Horticulture Agent, University of Wisconsin-Extension in Milwaukee Co.

- Harvest onions and garlic as the tops dry and fall over. Braid garlic tops and hang in a cool, dry place. Cut onion tops back to 1" and dry thoroughly before storing. Use any damaged produce immediately. 
- Make the second application of fertilizer on new plantings of June bearing strawberries. Apply 3 lbs. of 10-10-10 per 100 feet of row.
- This is a good time to order and plant spring flowering bulbs for next year's early flower display. Plan for different flowering times to extend the season. As with most flowers, they are best displayed in masses of all one type and color rather than in mixtures which can be busy and garish. 
- Mid-August thru September 20th is the ideal time to seed or sod new lawns or to repair diseased or damaged areas of your yard. Prepare areas with an application of the herbicide glyphosate 10 days before seeding or sodding. Rototill the area to a depth of 6-8". Work in extra organic matter and fertilizer. Level and rake smooth. Rake seeded areas lightly to bury seed about 1/8 inch. Tamp to assure good seed to soil contact. Cover newly seeded areas with a very light layer of straw to help retain moisture. 
- Do not allow to dry out until all grass has emerged - about 15 days. Mow as soon as the new grass is 3 - 3 1/2 inches tall.
- If you haven't already done so, divide irises now before their second flush of root growth which will

occur during fall's cool, moist weather. Examine rhizomes for borer tunnels and soft rot. Destroy all infected plants. Replant by barely covering the small sections of rhizome each with a fan of leaves and some roots. Cut leaves back by 2/3's.



- If you want flowering plants indoors this winter of fuchsia, wax begonia, impatiens, geraniums, and coleus, root cuttings now in vermiculite or perlite. Use rooting hormone powder on cut stem ends. Keep flats or pots in a calm, shady spot outdoors until mid-September.
- In the flower garden, continue deadheading which will allow plants to use energy reserves for a final flower display. If there are signs of diseases, remove all leaf litter and spent plants to prevent the spread of spores. 
- Prepare for a Labor Day fertilizer application to the lawn unless you will be doing a weed n' feed treatment later in September. Mid-September is the only time of year when weed and feed products are actually timed right for both the weed control and the fertilization. If you do three applications of fertilizer per year, they should be at Halloween, Memorial Day and Labor Day. Use a slow release product for the late season application. 

## Upcoming Events - Cont.

### Tiffany Bottoms Wetland Train Ride

September 6 | 1 until 5 pm |  
Meet at the Tiffany Wildlife  
Area Parking Lot  
\$25 for Friends, \$35 for  
Nonmembers

**63 spots available.**



Ride the rails through the Tiffany Wetland Bottoms with the crew from Beaver Creek Reserve. Spend the day on an open-air, antique train while exploring the wetlands. The round-trip ride, approximately 14 miles, will let you see what makes these wetlands so unique and important to our plant and wildlife habitat. This ride will have an emphasis on Citizen Science volunteer research projects.

Be sure to pack a cooler with snacks and refreshments for the day while we tour and hike the trails, 0.25 -0.5 miles each. Participants should dress for the weather and possibly wet terrain. Bring binoculars and any wanted field guides. Rain or shine, don't miss this exciting event!

Directions to Tiffany Wildlife Area is approximately a 45-minute drive from Eau Claire. Follow Highway 85 to Durand and take Highway 25. The Tiffany Train parking lot is about five miles south of Durand on right side of Highway 25. Look for Tiffany Wildlife Area Parking lot sign near the junctions of Highway 25 and Thibodaux Road, which runs parallel to the railroad track.

#### Beaver Creek Reserve

S1 County Road K | Fall Creek, WI 54742  
715.877.2212 | [bcr@beavercreekreserve.org](mailto:bcr@beavercreekreserve.org)

### Composting and Lasagna Gardening

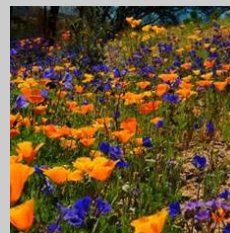
Erin LaFaive, Horticulture Agent

[Altoona Public Library](#)

Thursday, October 7 – 6:30pm

This presentation will provide information on how to create compost from common household kitchen scraps and yard waste. The same techniques to composting can be applied to a type of gardening called lasagna gardens.

Please sign up at the library circulation desk, or call the library at 715.839.5029.



### Wildflower Ramble

September 6 | 10 until 11 am |  
Powerline corridor next to North  
High School - Eau Claire  
\$5 for Friends, \$8 for  
Nonmembers

**17 spots available.**

Join BCR Volunteer Naturalist Pam Rasmussen for a walk along the 312 North Crossing power line corridor. The native plants will be spectacular at this time of the year. Pam will highlight and teach you how to identify some of the native prairie grasses and fall flowers that are growing along the North Crossing powerline.

#### Beaver Creek Reserve

S1 County Road K | Fall Creek, WI 54742  
715.877.2212 | [bcr@beavercreekreserve.org](mailto:bcr@beavercreekreserve.org)

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Website: [www.yourcountyextensionoffice.org](http://www.yourcountyextensionoffice.org)

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FREE online at: [eauclaire.uwex.edu/horticulture-2](http://eauclaire.uwex.edu/horticulture-2)

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**UW  
Extension**  
Cooperative Extension  
Eau Claire County

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