

Down to Earth

Michigan State University Extension Master Gardener Program—Genesee County

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Letter from the Program Coordinator

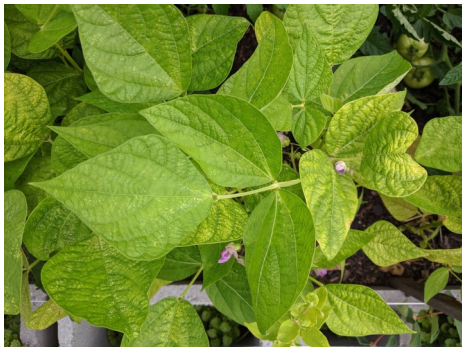
Barslund Judd (juddbars@msu.edu)

Howdy gardeners!

We are getting closer to the end of summer so get outside and enjoy nature as much as you can. I don't know how your gardens have been this year but I have had my share of spider mite problems. My beans are on their last leg as a result. My ground cherries also got damaged this year from spider mites and potato beetles. This means my harvest has been smaller than usual. What is a gardener to do when there aren't enough ground cherries to make jam? Throw in some tomatoes, of course! For the first time, I made ground cherry and tomato jam. I have to say it is pretty tasty and a great use for a few tomatoes since I have so many. If you are feeling brave and have access to ground cherries, let me know and I'll share the recipe that I made up.

I know that I have been sharing flower pictures from my garden, but this time I'd like to share some disease and pest issues.

Barslund Judd



Left: "Stippling", spotted damage from spider mites on yellow wax beans
Right: Underside of leaf showing spider mites



Left: Haskap berry with powdery mildew.

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Newsletter Committee

- Mary Yelland (**Article Liaison**)
- LaDonna Gamble (**Hotline Articles**)
- Joanne Gensel (**Association Page**)
- Michelle Chockley (**VMS Corner**)
- Carol Pittard (**Editor**)
- Cheryl Borkowski (**Format Editor**)

If you are interested in writing an article for the DTE newsletter, please feel free to reach out to us! We love having new input and hearing new perspectives. We ask that articles have an educational component that is research based and utilizes solid sources.

Frogs and Toads

Frogs and Toads in Michigan

By Carol Pittard

This year there have been more frogs and toads in areas where I garden...both at home and at Woodbury Rest Area. That is a good thing because as adults they are carnivorous eating such things as mosquitoes, flies, ants and other pests making them beneficial to our gardens. Plants and leaf litter provide shelter for them that a lawn does not provide. Plus, they add a somewhat relaxing song to the area.

My frog identification skills are lacking, though. So after seeing four different tree frogs at Woodbury Rest Area last week, I decided to go through my photos and try to figure out what I'd seen. Below are several different sources that I used and what you can use if you run into the same or different frogs/toads as you garden. Depending upon the source, we have between twelve and fourteen frogs and toads in Michigan. In this area, the only toad is the Eastern American Toad.

Harding, J.H. and J.A. Homan. 1992. [Michigan Frogs, Toads, and Salamanders: A Field Guide and Pocket Reference MSU Cooperative Extension and MSU Museum](#). Extension Bull. E-2350, 144 pp.

This is a slow-to-open pdf version of the actual book. Frogs and Toads can be found on pages 54-101; it includes their distribution area and has photographs.

Keweenaw Bay Indian Community Natural Resources Department. [Frog and Toad Identification Guide](#)

This is a one-page handout that can be taken with you for fast identification.

Michigan Audubon Society. [Celebrating Spring Amphibians](#)

Scroll to the bottom of the page to find a link to each of the Michigan frogs and toads.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources. [Frogs and Toads](#)



Cope's or Eastern Gray Tree Frog



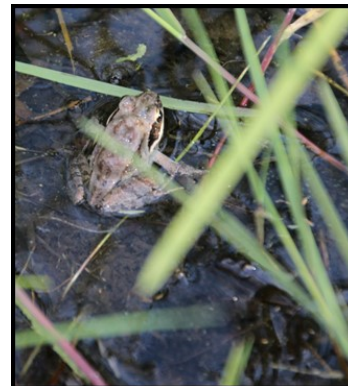
Northern Spring Peeper



Eastern American Toad



Eastern American Toad
climbing rocks!



Wood Frog

Featured Article

Poison Ivy: “Leaves of Three—LET IT BE

By: Dale Daron, EMG Class of 2017

Well, maybe not always. To condemn the rest of the plant world for the crimes of some wouldn't be fair in my eyes. OK!! So maybe I'm just trying to justify my phobia about POISON IVY. It's not to say that I'm a slow study, but—well maybe I am at that. It has been at least 18 months since I've tangled with poison ivy. The first time being involved with PI was about 30 years ago when we were removing a vine from the corner of the house. Thank goodness it wasn't a vine covered cottage. Yep, sure enough it was PI. This resulted in a trip to the doctor's office for two out of the three of us, with my wife, Mildred, being the exception.



Alabama Extension CCO

My next exposure to PI happened when Mildred was clearing some PI from an area that I never got closer to than three feet away and I still was affected by the PI. There must have been a breeze blowing that day. That's my story and I'm sticking to it! On a more recent note, I was taking a break from clearing some overgrowth around a group of trees and noticed that I had set my lawn chair within six inches of some new growth PI. It must be a case of “old too soon and smart too late”!

While working around the house this season, I noticed for the first time, a vast amount of small green plants with 3 leaves. Talk about CONCERNED. They came all across the front of the house to the front door. While they didn't look exactly like some known PI, I took a picture with my phone app and then confirmed it through MSUE as Bishop's goutweed, *Aegopodium podagraia*, which is an invasive species and has been said to be one of the worst garden weeds. Another similar leaf is found on boxelder seedlings that has caused me to take a second look more than once. Boxelders can be distinguished by their opposite leaves and white waxy stems, unlike PI which has alternate leaves. Needless to say, there are a number of PI look-alikes in the plant world that are not PI.

While not being something to bet the farm on, there are a number of reference apps on electronic media such as phone apps and links on the computer that can provide some insight into what you are trying to identify. On one occasion I had a picture that my phone app identified as a plant that was actually a grass as recognized by someone with a discerning eye.

When in doubt as to what you may have, the smart thing to do is get a picture of it that you can take to a reliable source such as MSUE, poison ivy on the computer or printed material put out by MSU on the subject in question.

Note: Dale mentioned using the computer for identifying poison ivy. These links will provide factual information about this native plant to which between 70-85% of the population have a sensitivity. It is the urushiol, which is the oily sap found on all parts of the plant, that causes the reaction when it is bruised and comes in contact with the allergic person. This can happen by touching the plant or it can be transferred on animal fur, tools, etc. and the plant doesn't even need to be touched!

Sources:

https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/identifying_poison_ivy_isnt_always_easy_to_do

[https://www.canr.msu.edu/pestid/resources/plant-and-weed-identification/PoisonIvy_E3438_AA%20\(002\).pdf](https://www.canr.msu.edu/pestid/resources/plant-and-weed-identification/PoisonIvy_E3438_AA%20(002).pdf)

Poison Ivy Quiz

[If you are interested in reading more about poison ivy and want to take a PI test go here!](#)

Outreach News, Puzzle

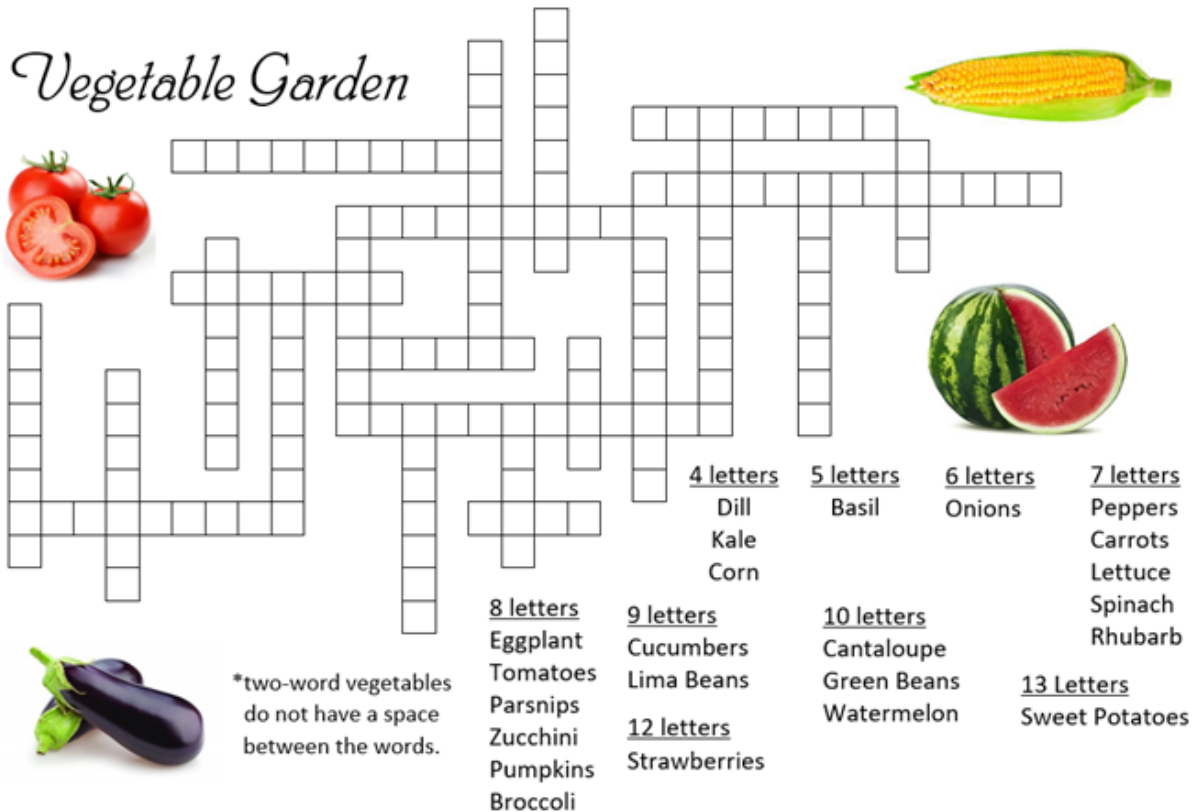
Outreach News

By Kay McCullough

At this time, there are no upcoming events that need EMG volunteers. Stay tuned!

Gardener's Logic Puzzle

Vegetable Garden



4 letters
Dill
Kale
Corn

5 letters
Basil

6 letters
Onions

7 letters
Peppers
Carrots
Lettuce
Spinach
Rhubarb

8 letters
Eggplant
Tomatoes
Parsnips
Zucchini
Pumpkins
Broccoli

9 letters
Cucumbers
Lima Beans

10 letters
Cantaloupe
Green Beans
Watermelon

12 letters
Strawberries

13 Letters
Sweet Potatoes

*two-word vegetables do not have a space between the words.

Gardening with Kids

Gardening with Kids... Make an Herbal Sachet

By Mary Yelland

Items needed:

- Some herbs
- 2 squares of cloth a little larger than the size of the sachet you want
- Sewing supplies (*needle and thread or sewing machine*)



1. Pick out what herbs you want to put in your sachet. Did you plant some herbs in the spring? What smells good together? If you want a pizza sachet, mix some oregano, basil, chives, and thyme. Maybe you will want just a single herb like a lavender sachet. You may want to add some spices that cannot be grown in Michigan like cinnamon, cloves or dried orange peel.
2. If you are using fresh herbs, you will need to dry them first. Pick a bundle of herbs. Tie the stems together with a string and hang them upside down to dry. This will take a few days. Don't just pack them together fresh or they may mold or spoil. After the herbs are dry, you are ready to make the sachet.
3. Using the 2 squares of fabric (thinner fabric is better) sew 3 sides together. Ask an adult how to do the sewing. If you use a needle and thread, use small stitches. Turn your square right side out. You will now have a little sack. Fill the sack with your dried herbs. Fold in the edges of the sack and sew it closed. Decorate with ribbons if desired.
4. To use your sachet: You can put it in a drawer with clothes, set it out on a table, put it under your pillow to smell when you are going to sleep or maybe put it in the pocket of a coat that is being stored for the summer.



Here are a couple pictures from the VMS album

Don't forget to put your pictures in the album!

Left: *Pycnanthemum muticum*, Short-toothed mountain mint. Bees love it! - Trudy Brewer

Right: *Crocsmia x crocosmiiflora* 'Lucifer' A real highlight in my garden! - Trudy Brewer



Time to Harvest Raspberries

by Mary Yelland



Raspberries follow strawberries and blueberries as the third most popular berry in the country. While Michigan is a national leader in many fruit crops, raspberries are not one of those fruits. California, Washington and Oregon are where most raspberries in the United States are grown. However, raspberries are often grown by backyard fruit growers and you may have a patch of your own. Most raspberries are the red variety but there are also black (not to be confused with blackberries which have a solid core), purple and yellow (or gold) varieties. Purple raspberries are a cross between red and black; yellow are actually a mutation of red or black varieties. Red berries are the most popular, black have the most disease problems, purple are the most productive and yellow tend to be the sweetest.

Once picked, raspberries do not have a very long shelf life. If fresh, they are often sold locally or as You-Pick. Raspberries should be used within a day or two from picking or purchasing. Once you have your raspberries, you may want to eat them fresh, as a cereal topping, or use in one of the following recipes.

Raspberry Almond Coffee Cake

Cake:

1 cup fresh or frozen raspberries	¼ teaspoon salt
3 tablespoons brown sugar	1 large egg
1 cup all-purpose flour	½ cup sour cream or plain yogurt
½ cup sugar	3 tablespoons butter, melted
½ teaspoon baking powder	1 teaspoon vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon baking soda	¼ cup sliced almonds



Icing:

¼ cup confectioners' sugar
1 ½ teaspoons milk
¼ teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions

Combine raspberries and brown sugar; set aside. In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. In a small bowl, whisk the egg, sour cream, butter and vanilla. Stir into dry ingredients just until moistened. Batter will be dense. Spoon half the batter into a greased and floured 8" round baking pan. (Make sure to completely cover the bottom of pan, it will seem like there is not enough batter but there is.) Top with raspberry mixture. Spoon the remaining batter over raspberries. Spread it around gently, you don't have to completely cover the raspberries. Sprinkle with almonds. Bake at 350 °F for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool, remove from pan if desired. In a small bowl, combine the icing ingredients; drizzle over the coffee cake and serve.

Raspberry Lemonade Concentrate

4 pounds fresh raspberries (about 14 cups)
6 cups sugar
4 cups lemon juice



Place raspberries in a food processor; cover and process until blended. Strain raspberries, reserving juice. Discard seeds. Place juice in a large pan; stir in sugar and lemon juice. Heat over medium-high heat to 190°. Do not boil. Cool. Divide mixture into five 1-pint freezer containers. Cover and freeze until ready to use.

To make raspberry lemonade, thaw one 1-pint container of concentrate. Mix with one pint of water, sparkling water, or ginger ale. Serve over ice.

VMS Corner

VMS CORNER

Michelle Chockley—Lead VMS Ambassador (Cell: 810-210-6685)

VMS Log in: <https://michigan.volunteersystem.org/UniversalLogin.cfm>

Garden Watch 2020 Reminder: Email Mary Yelland photos of your personal home gardens to post in the VMS photo album (dmyelland@juno.com). We had **71** the last time I looked!

How is everyone doing with getting his or her hours logged?

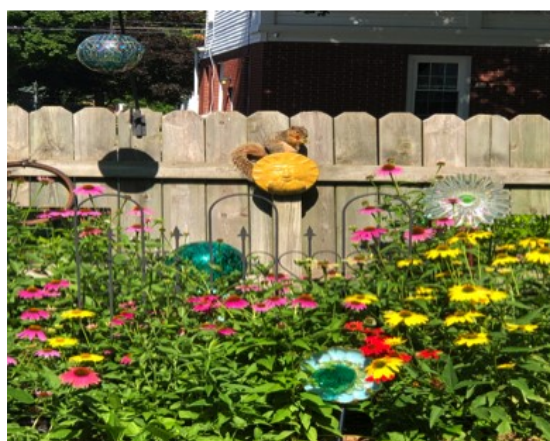
Hi, Everyone! I hope this issue of the DTE finds everyone well. It is that time of year, when I start checking hours on the VMS. **So this is your friendly reminder to please enter your hours if you haven't already done so.** *If you need any help or have questions, please let me know at chockleym@gmail.com.*

Please look at the list of approved projects under **Links** on the lower right side of the VMS for the correct project selection when entering your hours. **EMG 2020 required hours = 10 education (The 20 volunteer hour requirement has been waived for 2020.)**

I have covered pretty much every topic on the VMS over the last year giving you useful tips and where to find information. If you would like any specific topic covered, please send me an email with your suggestions. Usually if you have a question, other folks do too. You can find the last 12 months issues of the DTE on this link if you would like to go back and revisit any issues: https://www.canr.msu.edu/genesee/master_gardener.

We have numerous projects that some of our EMG's are working on after getting site approval and sending the Covid Project Safety Guidelines with a typed signature to Barslund. Volunteer hours are not required to keep EMG certification this year, but many EMG's are out there maintaining their projects, including our trainees. We know how quickly a garden can go downhill when left unattended. And sometimes, we've just got to garden! We miss our garden plants and friends. A big THANK YOU to all of our EMG's and trainees during this time.

No screen shots of the VMS this time. How about one of my back yard!



Master Gardener Association Genesee County

The Master Gardener Association of Genesee County Michigan (MGAGCM) is an association of Extension Master Gardeners (EMGs). Membership is optional for certified Extension Master Gardeners. The MGAGCM provides support to local EMGs through project funding, plant signage, and extra educational opportunities.

Note from MGAGCM President—Joanne Gensel

Hello, Extension Master Gardeners!

The garden season is starting to wind down and so are the term limits of four of the current board members:

President—Joanne Gensel

Vice President—Sabrina VanDyke

2nd Vice President—Loretta Ellwood

Communication Director—Mel Kennedy

If you would like to be a board member and help steer the Association in the coming years, here is your opportunity. If you would like to work on the election committee we are taking volunteers.

It's been a challenging year and next year looks to be similar. Let us know if you have ideas or suggestions about what you would like to see happen in our association to help us navigate and stay connected during these difficult times.

Contact Mel Kennedy or any of the Board Members listed in the chart below about your interests.

Kindest regards,
Joanne

MGAGCM Board of Directors

President	Joanne Gensel	jhgensel@gmail.com	(810) 339-0764
1st Vice President	Sabrina VanDyke	brie0212@gmail.com	(810) 407-0808
2nd Vice President	Loretta Ellwood	ldellwood@aol.com	(810) 344-7383
Secretary	Margaret Sowle	leemar4321@frontier.com	(989) 723-6074
Treasurer	Michelle Wareham	m.wareham@yahoo.com	(810) 919-2945
Outreach Director	Kay McCullough	birdieball@aol.com	(810) 635-9341
Communication Director	Mel Kennedy	mkennedy60@charter.net	(810) 275-8822

Master Gardener Association Genesee County

Websites:

MGAGCM Website—www.geneseecountymg.org

MGAGCM Facebook Page —www.facebook.com/groups/216904628327310/

MMGA Inc Website—www.michiganmastergardener.org

MMGA Inc. Facebook Page—www.facebook.com/MichiganMG/

Upcoming Events:

MGAGCM Events:

Jan. 16: **Seed Starting 101** – Deirdre Hope
Project ID: Food: General Gardens

Feb. 20: **Cactuses and Succulents That Will Prickle Your Fancy** – Barslund Judd
Project ID: Community: Beautification - Public Areas

Mar. 19: ~~Michigan Invasives: A Look At The Past, Present and Future~~—with Brian Van Patten
Project ID: Environmental Stewardship: Invasive Pests and Plants **Cancelled due to COVID-19**

Apr. 16: ~~Extension Master Gardener Banquet [Potluck—MGAGCM provides chicken and beverage—watch for link to sign up!]~~ **Postponed**

May 16: **MGAGCM Native Plant Sale** at Davison Farmers Market (*Saturday, starting at 9:00 a.m.*) **Postponed until September 12th.**

May 21: ~~Flowering Plants for the Cutting Garden~~—Jane Giblin **Cancelled and presentation changed to Yellow Stripey Things: Bees, Hornets and Wasps** – Abi Saeed / *Project ID: Environmental Stewardship: IPM - General*

June 18: ~~Meeting at Wojo's (Wojo's Speaker...TBA)~~ **Cancelled**

June 28: ~~Genesee County Extension Master Gardener Tour 2020 (Sunday, from 10 a.m.—5 p.m.)~~ **Postponed** *Project ID: Community: Beautification—Public Areas (If you visit all the sites, you'll get 3.5 Ed. Hrs.)*

July TBD: **MGAGCM July Picnic (at Crossroads Village)** **Cancelled**

Aug. 20: **Food Safety in the Home Garden**—Micah Hutchison
Project ID: Food: General Gardens

Sept. 12 **MGAGCM Native Plant Sale** at the Davison Farmers Market (rescheduled from May 16th) [*The link has an order form, plant list, and plant information.*] **Postponed to 2021**

Sept. 17: **Gardening for Pollinators** – Jay Blair
Project ID: Environmental Stewardship: IPM - Pollinators

Oct. 10: ~~Fall Into Spring~~ **Cancelled**

Oct. 15: **Native Michigan Wildflowers and Why You Want Them in Your Landscape** – Sara Thomas
Project ID: Environmental Stewardship: Native Plants

Nov. 19: **Holiday Party**

2020 MGAGCM meetings and or presentations are held on the third Thursday of each month in the GCCARD Building, 601 N. Saginaw Street, Flint, MI 48502-2009 (*except December & unless otherwise noted*).