

MSU IN BLOOM

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY HORTICULTURE GARDEN NEWS



Garden Day 2017

Keynote Speaker and
Evening Reception

Growing Soup

Corn and Zucchini
Chowder

Director's Corner

Great perennial
combinations

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MSU HORTICULTURE GARDEN NEWS

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- Train Day-Children's Garden** July 20
- Water Day-Children's Garden** July 25
- Bug Day-Children's Garden** July 27
- Garden Day** August 5
- Houseplant and Succulent Sale** November 1&2

Visit

[HTTP://WWW.HRT.MSU.EDU/OUR-GARDENS/](http://www.hrt.msu.edu/our-gardens/)



Don't miss the excitement, wonder & fun of
GARDEN DAY 2017
at **MSU Horticulture Gardens**
SATURDAY, AUGUST 5 • 8AM - 4:15PM

Featuring Helen Yoest—Keynote Presenter

Helen Yoest, Director of BeeBetter.info, is a frequent speaker for horticultural societies and Master Gardener groups throughout the nation. One of Helen's books, *Plants with Benefits*, will be the topic of her first presentation and is sure to add some spice to your life! You'll find out how 50 plants got their hot reputation—and what modern science has to say about it. In her second presentation, *My Forever Garden*, find out how to make your garden manageable and more desirable than ever, leading to years of future enjoyment!



CUSTOMIZE YOUR GARDEN DAY EXPERIENCE BY SELECTING FROM THE FOLLOWING WORKSHOPS:

Cacti and Succulents for the Michigan Garden • Herbaceous Perennial Garden Tour
50 Garden Ideas & French Lavender Goat Milk Soap Making • Garden-Sized Trees
Attracting Butterflies, Hummingbirds and Other Pollinators • Don't Let Your OAK WILT
Close Entomology of the Gardening Kind • Pressed Flower Art Techniques • Growing Soup

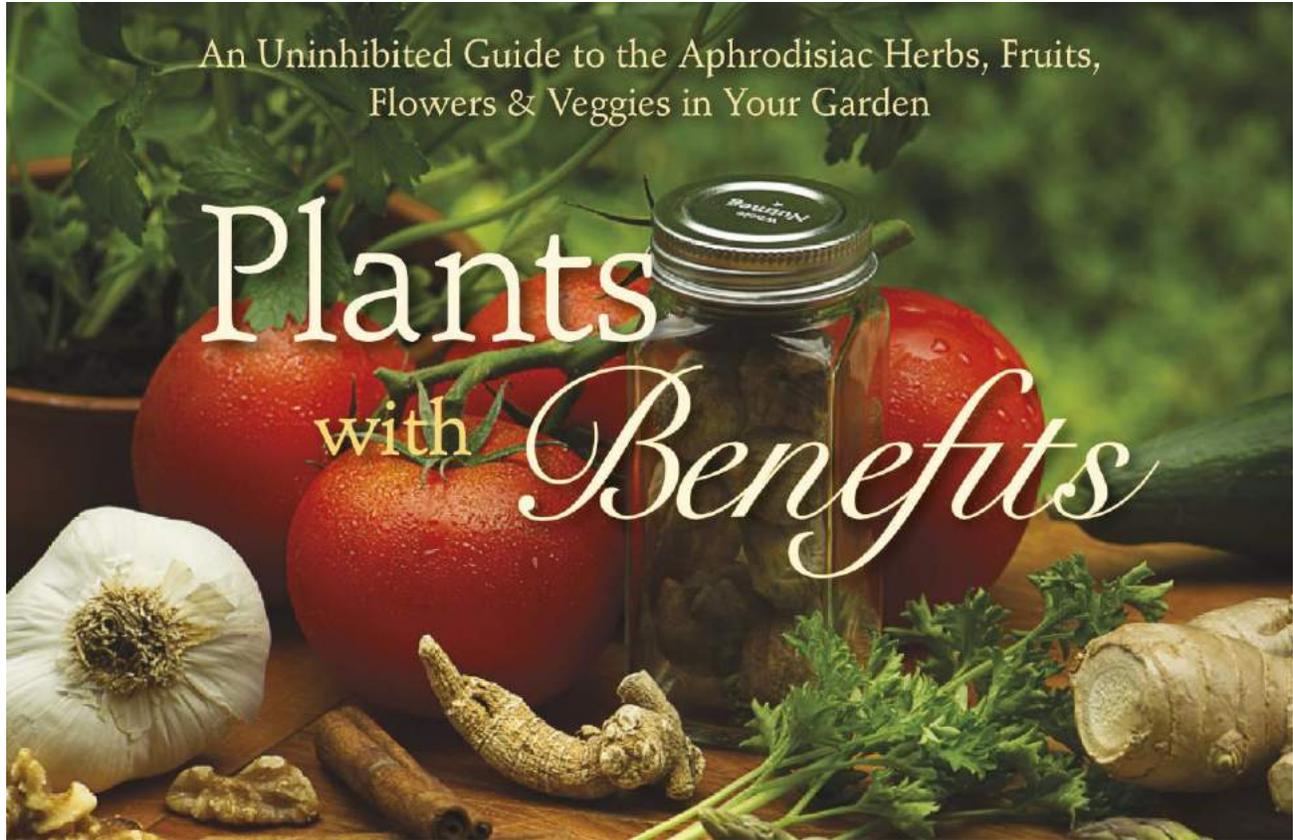
For more information and to register, visit: hrt.msu.edu/garden-day

The day includes two keynote presentations, two workshops of your choice, book signing, parking, lunch and dessert from Grand Traverse Pie, materials and access to the Green Garden Marketplace.

\$76.00 for 2017 Garden members, \$86.00 for non-members.

For more information and to register, visit: hrt.msu.edu/garden-day

An Uninhibited Guide to the Aphrodisiac Herbs, Fruits,
Flowers & Veggies in Your Garden



PLANTS WITH BENEFITS RECEPTION

EXTEND YOUR GARDEN DAY FUN AND JOIN US FOR AN
EVENING RECEPTION WITH HELEN YOEST!

By Jennifer Sweet
Program Coordinator

During Garden Day, you'll hear keynote, Helen Yoest, discuss her wildly entertaining book, *Plants with Benefits*. When you join us for this special reception, you'll have the opportunity to join Helen for a personal tour of a special "Plants with Benefits" garden, within our MSU Horticulture Gardens. Take a romp through history, lore and ethnobotany as you get up close and personal with plants, recipes and more! You'll learn how common garden plants and favorite edibles have the ability to benefit all five senses. Additionally, you will be provided with growing tips as well as invigorating samples! After you are thoroughly captivated, guests will walk back to the conservatory where hors d'oeuvres and continued conversation can be enjoyed. This evening is perfect for guests who want to add "something extra" to their Garden Day experience!

Saturday, August 5, 2017 / 4:45 p.m. (After Garden Day)

MSU Gardens Conservatory

\$35- MSU 2017 Garden members / \$45- Non-members

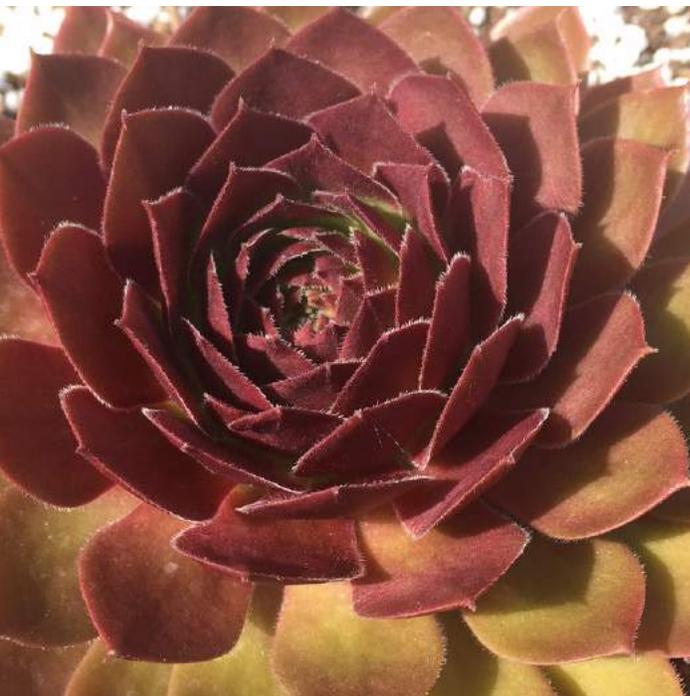
Register here: https://commerce.cashnet.com/msu_3206?itemcode=3206-onlyeve



GARDEN DAY PREVIEW:

CACTI & SUCCULENTS FOR THE MICHIGAN GARDEN

BY DAEDRE MCGRATH
TRIAL GARDEN MANAGER



Haven't registered for Garden Day yet? Not sure which workshops to attend? Here's a little more information about my workshop, Cacti and Succulents for the Michigan Garden.

Cacti and succulents are incredibly trendy right now. They are such a hot commodity that they are one of the few plants we find people stealing from our gardens and greenhouses! Their versatility and resilience are one of their most appealing characteristics. Most can be grown as houseplants, although some prefer higher light-levels that most of us can provide indoors. Many can also be grown in the garden either in containers, hanging baskets, or right in the ground. Some are hardy enough to survive our Michigan winters and will show off year after year. Other varieties are frost-tender, but can be used like annuals to add seasonal color, texture, and eye-catching interest.



This summer, the MSU Horticulture Gardens is conducting an evaluation of over 80 varieties of succulents for their adaptability and ornamental value in Michigan gardens. Come to this workshop, learn how to grow your own, and you'll never be without these unique and unusual plants again. Each attendee will receive a selection of cuttings to grow at home.

Figure 1



THE DIRECTOR'S CORNER: GREAT PERENNIAL COMBINATIONS

BY ART CAMERON, GARDEN DIRECTOR

In August, I will be teaching a Garden Day workshop with a walk in the Gardens focusing on herbaceous perennials, always one of my favorite topics! Last week, for 4-H Exploration Days, I had the opportunity to teach Digital Photography in the gardens. It was especially fun since some of the students took some remarkable images. As I looked around the gardens for photo opportunities of my own, I found myself focusing on close-ups and interesting herbaceous perennial combinations.

One interesting scene combined the unique *Spigelia marilandica* and the ever-popular *Coreopsis verticillata* 'Moonbeam' (Figure 1). *Spigelia* has very interesting flowers and really belongs in more Michigan gardens. It is native from Florida to Illinois and Indiana, cold hardy to zone 5, and definitely will elicit comments from your gardener friends! *Spigelia* seems to do best in partial shade and with a bit of moisture. The red and yellow flowers persist for several weeks in late spring and early summer. It has taken a few years to really become established in the gardens, but it is really starting to show off! *Coreopsis verticillata* 'Moonbeam' was one of the first Perennial Plant Association's "Perennial of the Year" in 1992 and has a long reputation of being an excellent perennial in Michigan gardens. The species is native as far north as Ohio. Relatively drought-tolerant, it can persist for years in the garden. It is a well-known beauty and the yellow flowers pick up remarkably from the yellow on the *Spigelia*. (continued on next page)



Figure 2

I discovered yet another interesting combination in the 4-H Children's Garden (Figure 2). You might think this photo was taken in a meadow but it was taken right near the Monet Bridge! In the foreground is Carolina lupine (*Thermopsis villosa*), native to the Carolinas and Georgia up into Kentucky. It is a tough plant with a deep root and quite tolerant of high temperatures and drought. It has bright yellow flowers reminiscent of yellow lupine to which it is closely related. Both the flowers and the pods are beautiful, so luckily the ornamental display does not end with flowering. In the background of this photo is a yellow, airy swath of yellow bedstraw (*Galium verum*). Many *Galium* ssp. have been used to stuff mattresses over the centuries leading to the common name of bedstraw. Native to Europe, yellow bedstraw is a dye plant used for yellows and even reds. It has been seeding around the Children's Garden a bit and Jessica Wright describes it as "exuberant" as opposed to invasive. I do think that it spreads quickly enough by seeds and underground runners so that gardeners should be well advised to keep it under control.

A slow walk will reveal even more great combinations in the summer gardens such as lamb's ear (*Stachys byzantina*) with yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) (Figure 3). In my opinion, this scene is cool since it is as much texture as color that drives the interest! This combo can actually look great over a period of weeks if not months. (continued on next page)



Figure 3

Figure 4



There are a multitude of great plant combinations in the Judith DeLapa Perennial Gardens. Two that caught my eye last year include an exuberant combination of our native blazing star (*Liatris spicata*), backed by a host of costars including statice (*Limonium* sp.), feather-reed grass (*Calamagrostis* 'Overdam') and butterfly bush (Figure 4). A second was a combination of forms and textures starting with sequential layers of little bluestem 'The Blues', *Amsonia hubrichtii*, Agastache 'Black Adder' and more, finally leading the eye up to a destination bench (Figure 5). I especially like the light vertical little bluestem against the complex patterns of *Amsonia hubrichtii*. The multi-colored, spike-style flowers of Agastache 'Black Adder' unite the scene. They are set off by the large, coarse leaves of native spring-blooming *Heracleum maximum* - cow parsnip (not the bad one). Gardens often look better the closer you look.

For those of you who plan to join me for my Garden Day workshop in August, we will be sure to address plant selection, design and maintenance. We will take a look at some of the new perennials on the market, and discuss how to create your own combinations at home. I will plan on throwing in a few tips on taking photos of your creations! Come ready with questions! Hope to see you then.

Figure 5



Summer's Bounty

Corn and Zucchini Chowder

By Jessica Wright
Educational Coordinator

As the seasons transition from summer to fall, our palate often takes a turn to warm soups and fall flavors. In my Garden Day workshop this year, we will offer ideas for cultivating a soup garden, recipes for delicious soups and savory salads. This recipe is a taste of what you can experience if you attend our yummy workshop. Recipe adapted from www.littlebroken.com

Summers Bounty Corn and Zucchini Chowder

- 1 Tbsp. butter
- 2 strips bacon, chopped
- ½ a large sweet onion
- 2 celery ribs, chopped
- 1 medium carrot, peeled + chopped (1/2 cup)
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme
- 2 medium potatoes, peeled, diced into ½-inch cubes
- 4 cups water
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 ears of sweet fresh corn, husked with kernels cut from cob (2¾ cup corn)
- 1 medium zucchini, diced into ½-inch cubes, (1½ cups)
- 1 cup half and half
- salt and fresh ground black pepper



INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large heavy-duty bottom stockpot or dutch oven, melt butter over medium heat. Add bacon and cook until bacon renders its fat and begins to brown, about 3-4 minutes.
2. Add onion, celery, carrots, garlic, and thyme; cook until vegetables begin to soften, stirring couple times, about 5 minutes.
3. Add potatoes, water, and bay leaf. Raise the heat to medium high and bring to a simmer, then lower the heat back to medium and simmer for 8-10 minutes or until the potatoes are halfway cooked.
4. Add zucchini and corn; season with salt and pepper, to taste, and simmer for additional 8-12 minutes or until the vegetables are completely tender.
5. Discard the bay leaf and then transfer 2 cups of chowder to a food processor or blender; puree until smooth. Stir the mixture back into the pot. Add half and half and cook just until heated through. Taste for salt and pepper.



WEDDING SEASON IN FULL BLOOM

BY RACHEL SZOPKO
WEDDING COORDINATOR

Our wedding season is in full bloom here at the MSU Horticulture Gardens, and the past few weeks have been absolutely magical! From ceremony rituals to decorations, each wedding has been unique and special in its own way. Both our North and South Garden act as beautiful settings for ceremonies and our North Garden conservatory serves as an elegant and romantic reception venue. The 2018 wedding season is booking up quickly! We look forward to all our future weddings at the MSU Horticulture Gardens and the opportunity to help each couple begin their happily ever after.

Interested in holding your special event at the MSU Horticulture Gardens? Visit our website for more information:

http://www.hrt.msu.edu/our_gardens/plan_a_wedding_or_event



Being a gateless public garden with free admission, we frequently find ourselves having interesting encounters while at work. Here is a sign we would like to put up in the garden to deter visitors from repeating history.

-Bethany Troy, Perennial Garden Manager

Please refrain from the following activities in the gardens:

- Dunking your baby, or anyone else's baby, into any of the water features.
- Allowing your children, or anyone, to throw rocks at frogs, consequently harming or killing them in the process.
- Living in the Children's Garden bathrooms for an extended period of time.
- Disposing cigarette butts into mulch piles, consequently catching the gardens on fire.
- Decorating hosta flowers, or any flowers, with assorted contraceptive devices.
- Daring your friends and/or family members to jump into the annual garden fountain in your skivvies.
- Drinking alcoholic beverages in excessive amounts, to the point that phlox and gaura look like a good place to spend the night.

Yes - we have witnessed all of these events happening in the gardens! Enjoy your stay, and be safe!



WHAT'S UNDER THE LID

THE UNDERWORLD OF THE GARDENS

BY DANIEL BULKOWSKI
GARDENS AND GREENHOUSE MANAGER



Water in a garden can bring tranquility and peace to a person resting nearby. Or, as in the case of the fountain in the annual garden, some parents bring their kids to play in it like it's a water park (I've seen it happen...complete with a picnic lunch and beach towels). However, as the garden manager, the water features can be a great source of angst and frustration when they are not working properly. So I wanted to give you a peek at what's under the lids of our water features and see the mechanical workings and plumbing that goes into them. This is one of the many reasons my hair has gone gray around here.



The Post Gardens Fountain in the annual garden has its plumbing and pumps under a very heavy lid about twenty feet away. I've strained a back muscle or two several times. The vault below (no money down there, except for the coins caught in the strainer basket) is classified as a "Confined Space." Therefore, we are not allowed to go down the ladder unless an air monitor is used to make sure there is no buildup of poisonous gases. So, a monitor is borrowed in the spring to reassemble the pumps and pool filter, and in the fall to tear it all down to be winterized.

The Anderson Family Fountain in the rose garden, as you may know, does not shoot water into the air as most fountains do. The pumped water floats a 1500lb solid stone ball on 10-15 psi of water pressure. Between the pumps, pool filters, water stock tank, and pvc piping there is not much room to maneuver in this vault. I look like a Three Stooges episode and a game of Twister gone wild when I'm in there putting it together. Fortunately, this vault is only about waist deep so an air monitor is not required. This vault is under the gray fiberglass lid fairly close to the ball fountain.



The last water feature that has a pump isn't a fountain, but the Spitting Frogs in the 4H Children's Garden. A 10' steel cable goes from the "gate" that children spin around, to the small pump under the green lid nearby. Water is drawn in by two roller type pumps that push water to each of the frogs. Unfortunately, the frogs aren't currently spitting. The cable has snapped for the second time in less than two years. A friend and I are working to get it back up and spitting. And we may have to tear out some concrete to see what keeps breaking the cable.



Water features in a garden are viewed by many to be a necessary part of the landscape. But the people that work to keep them running would be just fine if they were omitted from the gardens. At least then my hair wouldn't be so gray.

