

# GREEN THUMB PRINTS

Gardening is our Passion ..... Education is our Purpose

February 2021

## Guest Gardener Presenter-Dave McPheron

Everyone be sure to tune in for our next ZOOM meeting on  
Thursday, February 11th at 6:30 pm.

Dave McPheron will speak to us about Natives and Nativars.

Read more about Dave and his presentation on page 6.

Thanks to Tim Brugeman and the executive committee for making this happen!!!



Please consider volunteering as a  
“Guest Gardener Presenter”  
or thinking of area gardeners  
who could present at  
our monthly meetings.

See page 6 for more information.

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## Coordinator's Corner

I hope each of you are taking the time to view the state webinars. You can get education hours for these and any hours above 10 will be counted as service hours per state guidelines. This is a good way to get your hours in as we stay mostly at home. In 2021 you will be required to get 10 education and 20 hours of service to remain active. These webinars can be found at: <https://mastergardener.osu.edu/lnlhh>.

The state conference for 2021 will be virtual again this year. More information will become available later in the year.

The extension office has reopened. If someone needs to come to the office, please call them to set up a time to take care of your need.

Hopefully, the project teams will begin to meet virtually to plan activities for the 2021 year. We should do our planning without face-to-face meetings and with the understanding that project work could get cancelled or delayed. This should not prevent teams from doing the planning work though. Again, the only face-to-face project work should be for the 4 outside projects if the OSU COVID-19 requirements are followed.

Just so you know there have been issues with The Courier on the timing of articles. The January article should have been published on January 30. Starting in February, it is our intention to publish articles on the first week of the month, however we are not guaranteed a spot on the date by the newspaper.

I am looking forward to Spring and hopefully you are too.

*Karl Farwig*

## *Reuben's Ruminations*

### *February 2021*

This time of year is about as quiet as it gets in the gardening world, even during a normal year. So, not a lot to report since our January 14 meeting. By the way, that virtual meeting was attended by 25 people, and 9 stayed on for the “Brown Bag” replay of an OSU webinar on poinsettias. And “replay” may explain why we didn’t have more people stay on for it. A number of you had already seen it during the Lunch & Learn webinar from OSU, which is a good way to build your education hours.

Good news about “Brown Bag” for February! Thanks to Tim’s networking and tireless efforts, we will have a real live (via Zoom, of course) presenter for the February session. I don’t want to steal the thunder, so check elsewhere in the newsletter for details. We have not yet decided on the time for the brown bag and meeting on February 11, so please watch for the Zoom meeting invitation from Karl for details.

More on the “Brown Bag” program: we are still looking for someone to take on coordination of the sessions, so please contact Peggy Biolchini or me if you are interested in taking that on. We could also use some volunteers to present future brown bag sessions. I hope the February presentation will inspire you, either to present a topic, or to use your network to find us a presenter.

Thanks to those who have stepped forward to do articles for *The Courier*. Due dates are now posted on the VMS calendar, so please check for an opening to submit an article on a timely topic.

While you’re poring over your seed catalogs – or looking for some online – be thinking about what you could write about or share via presentation. And still help me find a title for these monthly blurbs. I’m not sure I’ll keep the one I’m trying out this month, but thanks for the suggestion.

*Reuben DeBolt*

## Hancock County Master Gardener Volunteers Meeting Minutes January 14, 2021

President Reuben DeBolt called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.  
Meeting was conducted remotely using Zoom, with Karl Farwig coordinating, 25 in attendance.  
The meeting was recorded so that those unable to attend could still review the meeting.

### Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the November 12, 2020 membership meeting were approved using the yes/no voting function on Zoom; motion: Lisa McClain; second: Linda Casey

### Treasurer's Report – Ann Woolum

- There were no transactions in December
- Reviewed year end Actual vs. Budget 2020
- \$7157.27 total cash balance, of which \$1203.35 is restricted for the Community Garden, leaving \$5953.92 unrestricted
- Motion to approve report: Elaine Reynolds, second: Marilyn Beltz; report approved

### President's Comments – Reuben DeBolt

- A \$25 donation was made to the Humane Society in memory of Kay Sidaway's husband
- Reviewed new officers and project leads
  - Secretary – Elaine Reynolds
  - Service Committee Chair – Tim Brugeman
  - OSU Ext Office Garden – Peggy Biolchini
  - Phenology Garden – Betty DeFrancesco
  - Seminars – Lisa McClain
  - Mugs of Joy – Rose Morrison will co-chair with Linda Laux
- Provide Betsy DeFrancesco with any info to be put on Facebook
- Still need people to sign up for monthly articles for the Courier
- OSU webinars are available to watch for educational hours
- Intend to have the plant exchange and possibly a seminar in the fall

### Volunteer Coordinator – Karl Farwig

- Volunteer hours reviewed

	Volunteer hrs	Education hrs	Contacts made*
2019	3714.72	1027.05	17763
2020**	1444.00	687.5	15117

\*includes Courier subscription as contacts made

\*\*actual hours, not including those assigned due to Covid restrictions

- In 2021 there will be no extra hours assigned; all members will be required to actually meet their education and volunteer hour quota
- OSU Extension office is closed through January 19<sup>th</sup>; no one is allowed in the building
- VMS is going away, but not yet, so continue to record your hours in VMS; Karl will be one of the beta testers for the new replacement software
- Reviewed how to record contact hours in VMS
- For Ask A Gardener hours, all members should report their own contacts in VMS even if they reported it to the committee chair

**(CONTINUED)**

**Hancock County Master Gardener Volunteers**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**January 14, 2021**  
**(CONTINUED)**

Committees

- Administrative – Lynn Farwig: no new info
- Social and Fundraising – Betty DeFrancesco: possible seminar in the fall
- Service – Tim Brugeman
  - Phenology Garden – Betsy DeFrancesco: proposed conversion of the phenology garden into a Sensory Garden with 4 season interest
  - OSU Extension Garden – Peggy Biolchini: Reviewing what to do come spring; any major changes will need to be approved by the Hancock County Commissioners; this is an approved project that we can work on, but all State Covid guidelines must still be followed; the following people volunteered to help:
    - \*Judi Clymer
    - \*Jeri Wenger
    - \*Betsy DeFrancesco
    - \*Tim Brugeman
    - \*Linda Casey
  - Mugs of Joy – no report
  - Community Garden – Brint Simmons: this is an approved project so we can get started in the spring but no more than 6 volunteers at a time and bring your own tools etc.; would like to order fencing and support posts for the Community Garden, expected cost to be \$295; Executive Committee will need to approve expenditure at their next meeting
- Teaching – Judi Clymer
  - Courier Articles – Laurie Pressel: need 6 more articles to fill out the rest of the year; Linda Casey suggested the May article could be about how to start a garden; articles will now appear in the Courier on the first Saturday of the month
  - Library presentations: waiting to hear if they are able to host power point presentations; Karl Farwig suggested the 50North presentations could be done the same way
  - Tim Brugeman suggested that we could record our own webinars to use for this
- Education – Peggy Biolchini
  - Ask a Gardener – had some questions asked at the end of December that will be recorded with the January report
  - Brown Bag – still need a coordinator; for anyone wishing to create a power point presentation, Karl Farwig showed where to find the MG branded power point slides; do not need approval to use the slides but the info must be factual and researched
  - Field Trips – Ann Woolum: tentative field trip on June 12, 2021 to see the gardens of Brenda & Joe Stearns in Fostoria

Old Business

Tim Brugeman moved to approve the “Phenology Garden” concept presented by Betsy DeFrancesco and her team, to prepare a plan to continue the garden with suggested improvements, phasing and potential costs, possibly renaming the area and expanding its use for educational demonstration and bring back to members for review before seeking OK from County Commissioners; second: Jeri Winger; motion approved

New Business

Laurie Pressel suggested we start a second, private Facebook page for MGV members only; discussion was had; Karl Farwig stated the new system replacing VMS may have a tool that will accomplish the same thing

Motion to Adjourn: Lynn Farwig; second: Barb Sherman; meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm; recording stopped, but those who wished could stay on Zoom to watch the OSU Webinar Poinsettias: History and Production

*Respectfully Submitted: Elaine Reynolds-Secretary*

## Guest Gardener Presenter-Dave McPheron

### *“Natives and Nativars”*

Are you wondering what the big deal is about Natives? We will explore (1)Why using native plants in your garden will benefit both you and nature around us; (2)Nativars and is it okay to plant them; and (3)What are some good choices for wildlife and pollinators?

**Dave McPheron will speak at our  
February 11th ZOOM meeting which starts at 6:30 PM.**

A graduate of The Ohio State University with a degree in Horticulture, Dave has been active in the horticulture industry for over 42 years. His experience includes owning a design/install landscape company and a garden center specializing in Perennials, Herbs and Water Gardens. He is now putting his energy into propagating and growing Ohio Native plants. He owns Star Farms Native Plants in Kenton, Ohio.

He is an Ohio State Master Gardener Volunteer in Hardin County and helps by being the Volunteer Coordinator. He also participates in the online Ask a Master Gardener Program.

## “Guest Gardener Presenters”

### **Tim Brugeman**

We need folks to do the "Brown Bag" talks, a ZOOM meeting feature we are calling (for now) "Guest Gardener Presenters" like Dave McPheron is doing in February.

We want our MGVs to be the guest presenters or suggest/invite their own speaker and topic to expand our educational options when we meet once a month.

We still need a chair for our Brown Bag Program, but if you would like to speak or know of someone who would make a good “Guest Gardener Presenter” please contact Peggy Biolchini or me.

[biolchini@aol.com](mailto:biolchini@aol.com)

[tbrugeman@woh.rr.com](mailto:tbrugeman@woh.rr.com)

Please think this over as we really want to keep this feature going.



# Master Gardener Spotlight Carolyn Lavender

## **1 Master Gardener Class: 2020**

## **2 Gardening Interests or Areas of Expertise:**

Carolyn likes vegetable and flower gardening. She says it was much easier to do in California, but is learning how to here with the critters and clay soil.

## **3 Hancock County Master Gardening Activities:**

So far Carolyn has only been able to do ZOOM classes. She did however attend the Hancock County MG Seminar and a day seminar in Indiana.

## **4 Community Activities:**

She belongs to several women's groups with one of them being Nature's Housekeepers.

## **5 Other Interests or Interesting Information:**

Carolyn enjoys traveling, reading, hiking, tennis, bicycling and being with her grandson.

# ***MG Happenings***

## **“Restoring Nature’s Relationships at Home”**

### **Doug Tallamy Webinar**

Some of you may have already watched this webinar presented through the *OSU Living Landscape Speaker Series*. If not it is about 1 hour long with 30 minutes of Q & A and well worth the time. Doug is a nationally know researcher/author/speaker and is well known throughout the country. Don’t forget you can count 1.5 hours towards continuing education on VMS.

<https://u.osu.edu/certify/living-landscape-speaker-series/>

## **Volunteer for Brown Bag Program Needed**

Please consider volunteering to coordinate our 2021 Brown Bag Program.  
Contact Peggy Biolchini at [biolchini@aol.com](mailto:biolchini@aol.com) if interested.



## **Writers for Courier Articles Needed**



We need several more volunteers to write articles for The Courier so we can complete our 2021 calendar.

Please consider volunteering for one of the months below:

**May 2021——October 2021——December 2021——January 2022**

Laurie does an excellent job of editing these articles so don’t worry if you don’t feel like a professional writer.  
The articles are due to her on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to when it will be printed.

Please contact Laurie Pressel at [lauriepressel3@gmail.com](mailto:lauriepressel3@gmail.com) if interested.



# Monarchs and Swallow-wort

Linda Casey



Black swallow-wort is a vine in the milkweed family that can densely cover other plant species.

Monarch butterflies need milkweed plants to survive. Their caterpillars cannot feed on other host plants. Female monarchs have evolved to lay eggs on milkweed, ensuring that their offspring have adequate resources for development. Females find the milkweed plants using a combination of visual and chemical cues.

An alien invader is jeopardizing this process by confounding female monarchs during the egg laying process. Black swallow-wort (*Cynanchum louisea*) and pale swallow-wort (*Cynanchum rossicum*) are members of the milkweed family that are native to Europe.

Female monarchs will lay eggs on black swallow-wort, even when it is growing in the same field as common milkweed. Monarch caterpillars cannot feed on black or pale swallow-wort plants, so caterpillars from eggs laid on these invasive plants will not survive. In addition, swallow-worts can crowd out native milkweeds, eliminating appropriate food sources for monarch caterpillars. Black and pale swallow-worts should not be confused with *Cynanchum laeve* (common names sandvine, honeyvine, bluevine milkweed, and smooth swallow-wort), a similar plant that is native to eastern and central U.S. states and Ontario. *C. laeve* is an appropriate monarch host, and is found in many of the same states as the invasive species. Sandvine has heart shaped leaves and white flowers, and is native to North America.

Swallow-wort species also reduce local biodiversity of native plants, invertebrates, and vertebrates. Studies show a decrease in arthropod biodiversity in areas covered by swallow-wort, when compared to similar old fields vegetated by native plants. Swallow-worts can take over open areas, which in turn leads to reduced grassland bird breeding and nesting. Swallow-wort species are allelopathic, releasing chemicals that will hamper the growth of surrounding plants. Like other milkweeds, swallow-worts produce glycosides that are toxic to mammals.

Both black and pale swallow-worts are herbaceous twining vines. Plants can reach 3 to 6.5 feet in length and have clear watery sap. The leaves are opposite, oval, and have smooth margins and pointed tips. Stems are covered with downy hairs. Flowers of the black swallowwort look like milkweed flowers; they are star shaped, dark purple in color, and have five triangular downy petals that are about as long as they are wide.

(Continued)

# Monarchs and Swallow-wort

(Continued)



Pale swallow-wort has flowers that vary from pink to burgundy in color. Unlike black swallow-wort, pale swallow-wort flower petals are longer than they are wide.



The green seed pods of both species are longer than those of common milkweed, but like *Asclepias* species, the pods split open in the fall, when seeds are ready. The seeds look like milkweed seeds, and are wind-dispersed. Pale swallow-wort spreads primarily by seed dispersal; black swallow-wort can spread both by wind-borne seeds and by rhizomes. They are frequently found in open areas, such as old fields and pastures, fence rows and roadside ditches; they have also been found in forested areas. Both species were accidentally introduced in the 1800s and have now spread to the Midwest, including parts of Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Missouri.

Controlling swallow-wort may require many years, since seeds can persist in the soil for up to five years. Management strategies vary but the first step is the successful identification of the plant. Swallow-worts are easiest to identify when they are flowering, or in late summer, when plants are more visible as they turn yellow in color. Plants in full sun develop fruits earlier than those in shaded areas, and should be the first to be removed to avoid seed dispersal. Once swallow-wort has been removed, it is important to replant the area quickly, so that recolonization by this and other invasive species doesn't occur.

(Continued)

# Monarchs and Swallow-wort

## (Continued)

Here are a few mechanical controls that can be used.

- Mechanical methods, such as hand pulling or digging, cutting or mowing, and seed pod removal. Mechanical methods are most useful in the early stages of infestation. Cutting the plant could lead to re-sprouting and should be used in combination with other methods.
- Chemical controls (herbicides) can be effective for large infestations but must be used for a number of years to ensure that younger plants are eradicated. Options include Glyphosate and Tricolpyr.
- Prescribed burning alone will not control swallow-wort and may encourage vigorous re-sprouting. However, burns can be used as a management tool in fire adapted areas once swallow-worts have been removed and natives have re-established.
- Appropriate disposal of all root crowns, root fragments, and seed pods is essential, they can produce new sprouts. Fragments and seeds should be bagged and either burned, or disposed of in a landfill. Plant parts should not be composted.
- There are no approved biological controls for swallow-wort in the United States. However, a leaf-eating moth species, *Hypena opulenta*, has been approved for use in Canada and was released in Ontario in 2013. The USDA approved a test release of this moth in the U.S. in 2017. This moth feeds exclusively on swallow-wort, and has the potential to keep this plant in check.





# IT'S Time To.....February

## HOME (Indoor plants and activities)

- Check water levels in cut flowers daily.
- Check stored produce and flower bulbs for rot, shriveling, or excess moisture. Discard any damaged items.
- Most houseplants require less water in the winter because growth is slow or stopped. Check the soil for dryness before watering.
- Move houseplants to brighter windows, but don't place plants in drafty places or against cold windowpanes.
- Early blooms of spring-flowering bulbs can make good gifts for a sweetheart. Keep these plants in a bright, cool location for longer-lasting blooms. Forced bulbs make poor garden flowers and you should discard them as blooms fade.

## YARD (Lawns, woody ornamentals and fruits)

- Choose appropriate plant species and cultivars, and begin drawing your landscape plans.
- Cut branches of forsythia, pussy willow, crabapple, quince, honeysuckle, and other early spring-flowering plants to force them into bloom indoors. Place the branches in warm water, and set them in a cool location.
- Check mulches, rodent shields, salt/wind screens, and other winter plant protections to make sure they are still in place.
- Prune landscape plants (except early spring bloomers) that should be pruned after flowers fade. Birches, maples, dogwoods, and other heavy sap bleeders can be pruned in early summer to avoid the sap flow, although bleeding is not harmful to the tree.
- Delay pruning fruit plants until you can assess winter injury.

## GARDEN (Vegetables, small fruits and flowers)

- Order seeds before it's too late for this year's planting.
- Sketch your garden plans. Remember to include plants to replace or replant crops that you will harvest in spring or early summer.
- Prepare or repair lawn and garden tools for the upcoming season.
- Start seeds indoors for cool-season vegetables so they will be ready to transplant to the garden early in the season. You should start broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage seeds five to seven weeks prior to transplanting.
- Test leftover garden seed for germination. Place 10 seeds between moist paper toweling or cover with a thin layer of soil. Keep seeds warm and moist. If less than six seeds germinate, then purchase fresh seed.

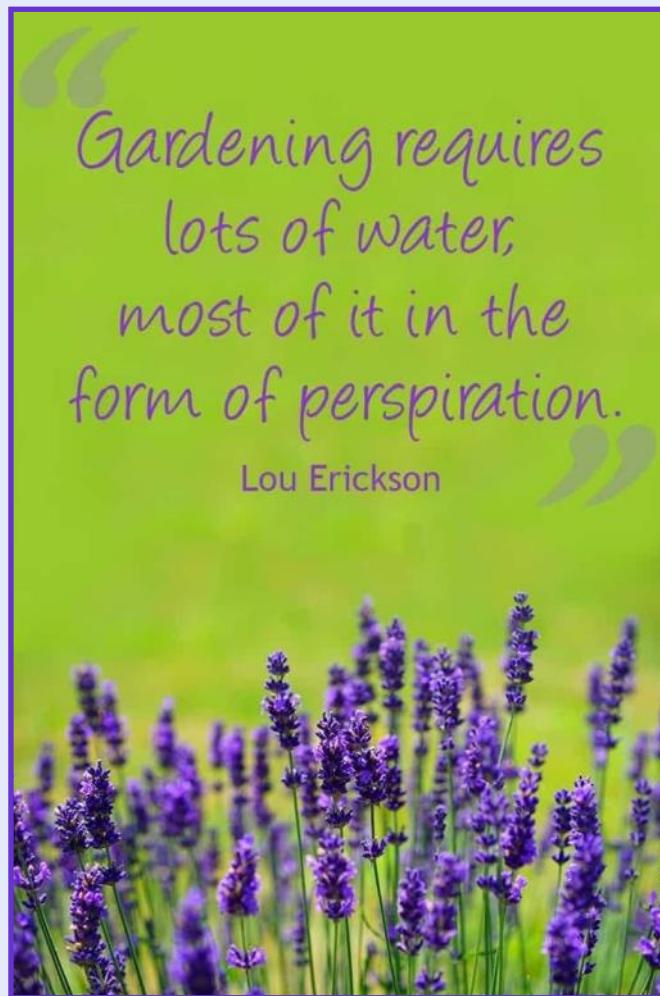




# THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

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