

# Racine Kenosha Master Gardener Association

Quarterly Newsletter – Summer 2014



## AAS Display

### Garden at KCC

Monday, August 4th

4pm to 7 pm

Kenosha County Center

19600 75th Street

Bristol, WI 53104

Come see the beautiful garden which will showcase All-American Selections at an early evening educational and fun event.

## Hawthorn Hollow Walk in the Woods Art Fair

Over 60 artists display their creations along the wooded trails and gardens of Hawthorn Hollow. Live music, food, and drinks throughout the day.  
-Saturday, September 6th,  
10am-4pm

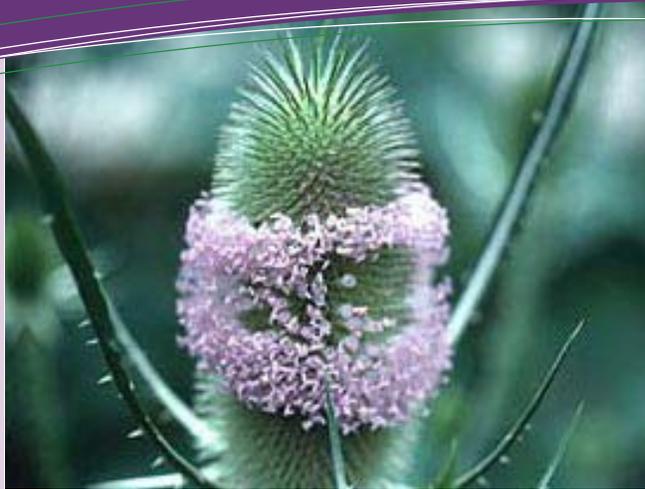
## Tomatomania Tasting Event @ Milaeger's

Saturday, September 6th

11:00am – 3:00pm

Racine Store

Sample 115 heirloom and hybrid tomatoes and 40 kinds of peppers.



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## Teasel By Susan Mahr, University of Wisconsin - Madison

The invasive weed called teasel has become established in many parts of the Upper Midwest. Two of the approximately 15 species in the genus *Dipsacus* of the teasel family (*Dipsacaceae*) can be seen in Wisconsin in open, sunny habitats especially along roadsides, in pastures or in disturbed areas. These plants, native to Europe, were introduced to North America in the 1700's for use in textile processing – the dried flowerheads were used by fullers as a natural comb for cleaning, aligning and raising the nap on fabrics (“teasing”), especially wool (brushing the nap produces air pockets that provide added insulation and a softer surface that is also more stain resistant, as well as softening the colors). Teasel as a commercial crop has been phased out by the middle of the 20th century when more durable and uniform steel cards had replaced teasel in industrial fulling operations. They are still sometimes grown as ornamentals or as decorative elements for dried floral arrangements,

and to use on a small scale for boutique woolen fabrics and handwoven textiles, and in specialty manufacturing (some pool table cloths, piano felts, etc.). Teasel has escaped cultivation and is spreading rapidly throughout the United States. These two species are listed as “restricted invasive plants” in Wisconsin and may not be bought, sold or moved around, even when dry, due to the potential for spreading seeds.



These herbaceous biennials (or monocarpic perennials) form a rosette of wrinkled prickly leaves from a large tap root. The individual oval to lanceolate leaves are entire or toothed, with a row of small spines on the underside of the midrib. The plant grows as a basal rosette for a minimum of one year, but the rosette phase may be longer on poor soils.



IPAW claims that invasive species have contributed directly to the decline of 49% of threatened or endangered species in the United States. The annual cost to the United States economy is estimated at \$138 billion a year, with over 100 million acres suffering from invasive plant infestations. Because there is a need for a greater understanding, it is IPAW's mission "to promote better stewardship of the Natural Resources of Wisconsin by advancing the understanding of invasive plants and encouraging the control of their spread."

Visit their site to see how you can help.  
<http://www.ipaw.org>



In the second season (or in subsequent years if needed to acquire enough resources for flowering), a tall, stout, rough to hairy flower stem up to 6 feet tall is produced. The angled stems with flat longitudinal ridges are scattered with small, whitish, down-turned prickles. The lower opposite leaves are sessile, while the upper opposite leaves are clasping. Where the leaves attach to the flower stems (their bases completely surrounding the stem), a cup-like receptacle is formed where rain water can collect. It has been suggested that this can prevent insects from climbing the stem.

The stems branches at the upper end to produce many terminal inflorescences. Teasel blooms in midsummer, with white, pinkish, or purple flowers in a distinctive inflorescence 2-4"

long. The ovoid to cylindrical inflorescence at the top of each stem has a basal whorl of spiny bracts that curve upward around the head. Flower buds are densely crowded together all around the spike. The individual tube-shaped, 4-lobed flowers open first in a band around the middle of the inflorescence, then open sequentially towards both ends, forming two narrow rings as flowering progresses. Each colony of plants typically is in bloom for about 2 months. Each flower has a stiff persistent bract, and the densely packed bracts around the floral spike give a pincushion-like appearance after the flowers have withered away.

Flowers are followed by irregularly bullet-shaped, 4-angled fruits (achenes) that mature in mid-autumn within

the persistent dried head. Teasel is a prolific seed producer, with over 2,000 seeds on a single plant. Adult plants die after flowering, but the flower stalks persist through the winter. The area of bare ground left where the leaves were is perfect habitat for new seedlings to germinate in, so populations quickly become very dense. The seeds do not generally move far from the parent plant, but may be dispersed over longer distances by mowing equipment or in flowing water.

There are two species of teasel that are established in Wisconsin: Common teasel, *Dipsacus fullonum* (= *D. sylvestris* and in some taxonomies also *D. sativus*.), and cut-



leaved teasel, *D. laciniatus*. Fuller's Teasel, a form of *D. fullonum*, usually refers to the cultivated type that has stiffer bracts and more pronounced recurved spines. Although Fuller's Teasel is better for working with cloth, the wild form was also used for fulling. Common teasel blooms from June to October, and generally has purple flowers. Cut-leaved teasel has a shorter bloom period (July-September), typically has white flowers, has broader leaves than common teasel, with irregularly pinnately-lobed upper stem leaves, and has straight bracts at the base of the inflorescence spreading outward rather than curling upward. The two species may hybridize. But it really isn't that important to correctly identify the species – both are invasive and should be removed quickly.

Cut-leaved teasel is more aggressive than common teasel and has been rapidly expanding its range in several Midwestern states, including southern and western Wisconsin, especially along roads where mowing equipment disperses the seeds. Teasel is much more widespread in Wisconsin than originally thought. The Invasive Plants Project (Wisconsin State Herbarium, 160 Birge Hall, UW-Madison 430 Lincoln Drive, Madison, WI 53706) is collecting information on the distribution of teasel and other invasive weeds. If you find a population of one of the invasive species in Wisconsin you may report it to the Wisconsin invasive plants reporting and prevention project.

Teasel can be controlled by cutting, digging, burning and/or with chemical applications.

Mowing, even repeatedly, is ineffective. In small infestations, rosettes can be dug up, removing as much root as possible to prevent regrowth. Plants will die without setting seed if flower stems are cut just before flowering, but the timing needs to be correct or the plant will reflower if the stalk is cut before the full bud stage and seeds will continue to develop from heads cut after flowering commences. Burning alone will not eradicate populations. Herbicides are best applied to the rosettes before flower stalk formation. Large infestations may require multiple tactics and treatments over several years to eliminate the population. Biological control with herbivorous insects in being investigated, but no releases are imminent.

## Resources

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource's Invasive species photo gallery:  
<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/invasives/photos/>

For assistance in identifying invasive weeds visit the University of Wisconsin Weed Identification and Management website:  
<http://weedid.wisc.edu/>

University of Wisconsin Extension's Invasive plants of Wisconsin For Your Information <http://fyi.uwex.edu/weedsci/category/invasive-plants-of-wisconsin/>

Weeds of Wisconsin USDA's database:  
<https://plants.usda.gov/java/invasiveOne?pubID=WI>

Southeastern Wisconsin Invasive Species Consortium, Inc. is a broad-based coalition that promotes efficient and effective management of invasive species throughout Kenosha, Ozaukee, Milwaukee, Racine, Sheboygan, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha Counties.





Photo credit: Zachary Huang, MSU

# Planting garden center flowers is good for bees and other beneficial insects

**The discovery of neonicotinoid insecticide in leaves and flowers of some garden center plants should not stop you from buying and planting flowers because the benefit to bees far outweighs the potential risk.**

By Dave Smitley, Michigan State U Extension, Dept. of Entomology

Recently, some Internet and media sources have suggested that buying and planting flowers from your local garden center could be harmful to bees because traces of neonicotinoid insecticides were found in the leaves and flowers of plants randomly purchased from garden centers around the country. Although it is true that concentrations of over 100 ppb of imidacloprid in nectar or pollen are toxic to honey bees, and lower concentrations (10 to 100 ppb) could affect their foraging behavior and immune response, the potential harm to pollinators in the yard and garden from buying and purchasing flowers from a garden center has been exaggerated. In fact, planting annual and perennial flowers and flowering trees and shrubs is expected to be beneficial for bees and other beneficial insects.

Greenhouse and nursery growers started using alternatives to neonicotinoid insecticides this year, and although the transition is not complete, the amount used is less than in previous years, and the plan should be fully adopted in 2015. Michigan State University began working with growers in March of 2014 to identify pest control strategies where neonicotinoids have been used so that alternative strategies could be adopted. Also, experiments were initiated to determine the risk to bees after treated plants are sold and planted in yard and garden. Several experiments are in progress now, where treated plants are put into screen cages with colonies of bumble bees.

People should not become too alarmed by the detection of neonicotinoids found in the leaves and flowers of some garden center plants. This does not mean that the plants will be toxic to bees. Here are several reasons why:

- Michigan is home to some of the largest greenhouse flower growers in the country. In a recent survey we found most growers do not make soil applications of neonicotinoid applications to petunias, impatiens, marigolds, New Guinea impatiens, verbena, ageratum, celosia, dianthus, portulaca, salvia, snapdragons, vinca and other bedding plants grown in flats. They usually do not spray flowers with any insecticide in the last two weeks of production. So flowers sold by the flat should be safe for bees.
- Many trees and shrubs, including all conifers, and many broadleaf trees like maple and oak trees are wind pollinated and are not usually visited by bees.
- Perennial flowers, roses, flowering shrubs and flowering trees will be a valuable resource for bees and other pollinators for many years after they are planted, while the risk to bees will be limited to those plants that were treated with a soil drench, and only when they are flowering in the first year.

- Bees feed on a large variety of flowering plants, and often forage as far away as a mile from their colony. Because they are feeding on many different plants, the presence of a neonicotinoid insecticide in one plant will be diluted when they feed on untreated plants.

Flowers bought in flats should be completely safe to bees. If you are worried about some of the perennials or flowering trees and shrubs that you purchase, the flowers could be removed during the first summer after planting. Also, if you buy trees or shrubs in a container you can reduce the amount of imidacloprid or any neonicotinoid insecticide which may be present in the soil by watering them until you see water emerging from the bottom of the container, and continue to run the water for another ten minutes. This will flush any neonicotinoid insecticide residue that is not tightly bound to the organic matter in the soil.

Another way to encourage bees and beneficial insects is to avoid spraying insecticides in the yard and garden as much as possible, and never spray flower blossoms. If you have a problem with caterpillars chewing too many holes in the leaves of some plants, you can use a product containing *Bacillus thuringiensis* or B.t. without harming bees and other beneficial insects.

Another bee-friendly option is to use horticultural oil or an insecticidal soap. They are effective on most soft-bodied

insects and can be used on cool mornings, less than 50 degrees Fahrenheit, after sunset, or at any time that bees are not present. The soap and oil residue is not harmful to bees, but spraying them directly is. Soap and oil can cause some plant injury, especially to open flowers, so do not exceed the rate given on the product label. In rare cases where a plant needs to be protected against damaging insects by using a broad-spectrum insecticide, it should be sprayed after petal-fall (after the plant is done blooming).

Below are some answers to a few related questions.

***What about neonicotinoid insecticides?*** *As with all insecticides, do not spray neonicotinoids on flower blossoms. Also, because they are systemic when absorbed by the roots, avoid using products that contain imidacloprid or clothianidin as a soil drench around plants that are attractive to bees. Using them as a basal (soil) drench around the base of wind-pollinated trees and shrubs, like most evergreens and trees like oaks and ash, is not likely to harm bees because bees rarely visit wind-pollinated plants.*

***What about the pesticides used on flowers, trees and shrubs sold at garden centers?*** *Nursery growers and greenhouse growers have been working closely with Michigan State University on how to grow plants that are safe for bees and other pollinators. They are following best management practices that include using alternatives to neonicotinoid insecticides, and they avoid spraying flowers close to when they are shipped to garden centers, to make plants as safe for pollinators as possible.*

***Could pesticide residue in the soil of garden center plants be contributing to the decline of commercial honey bee colonies?*** *Although it is desirable to grow flowers in the yard and garden for bees and other beneficial insects, our garden plants are not usually a primary food source for commercial honey bee colonies, and therefore have very little to do with the problems that beekeepers have had.*

*Dr. Smitley's work is funded in part by MSU's AgBioResearch. This article was published by Michigan State University Extension.*

Learn more about native pollinators by reading:

Pollinators

Christy Stewart, UW Horticulture  
and USDA-ARS

Item number: XHT121

<http://hort.uwex.edu/articles/pollinators>



## Continuing Education hours are due in to the Racine County UW-Extension office by October 1, 2014

Feeling great about all of your volunteer hours completed, recorded and ready to turn in for certification? That is fabulous, and all volunteer efforts are appreciated. But don't forget, a minimum of 24 volunteer hours needs to be accompanied by at least 10 hours of continuing education to maintain MGV certification. If you look on the back of your MGV time sheet you can get some ideas of what can be included for continuing education.

- Wisconsin Horticulture Update teleconference is every Friday from 9:30-10:30 am through September 12th at Kenosha County UW-Extension office or call ahead if you plan on attending at the Racine County UW-Extension office.
- The Wisconsin Horticulture Update podcast is available anytime at <http://fyi.uwex.edu/wihortupdate>
- There are online education opportunities through Wisconsin Public Television (The Wisconsin Gardener) and Wisconsin Public Radio (Larry Meiller's Garden Talk), and there are a few PBS shows that you can use for continuing education. TV shows should not account for no more than 5 of your 10 hours.
- There are many opportunities to hear great speakers, including at the RKMGA meetings. If you attend the business meeting and the educational program you can count 0.5 hour for volunteer support service, and 1.0 hour for continuing education.
- Educational programs at garden clubs, Gateway Technical College, garden centers, botanical gardens, and of course, any educational programs offered by UW-Extension will count as continuing education. Keep learning!

# Wisconsin Historical Society's Books on Gardening

## **Putting Down Roots: Gardening Insights from Wisconsin's Early Settler** by Marcia C. Carmichael

Culture and history can be passed from one generation to the next through the food we eat, the vegetables and fruits we plant and harvest, and the fragrant flowers and herbs that enliven our gardens. The plants our ancestors grew tell stories about their way of life.

Wisconsin's nineteenth-century settlers arrived in the New World in search of new opportunities and the chance to create a better life. These European immigrants and Yankee settlers brought their traditional foodways with them—their family recipes and the seeds, roots, and slips of cherished plants—to serve as comfort food, in the truest sense.

This part of our collective history comes alive at Old World Wisconsin's recreated nineteenth-century heirloom gardens. In *Putting Down Roots*, historical gardener Marcia C. Carmichael guides us through these gardens, sharing insights on why the owners of the original houses—be they Yankee settlers, German, Norwegian, Irish, Danish, Polish, or Finnish immigrants—planted and harvested what they did. She shares timeless lessons with today's gardeners and cooks about planting trends and practices, garden tools used by early settlers, popular plant varieties, and favorite flavors of Wisconsin's early settlers, including recipes for such classics as Irish soda bread, pierogi, and Norwegian rhubarb custard. Winner of the 2012 annual Book Award from the American Horticultural Society.

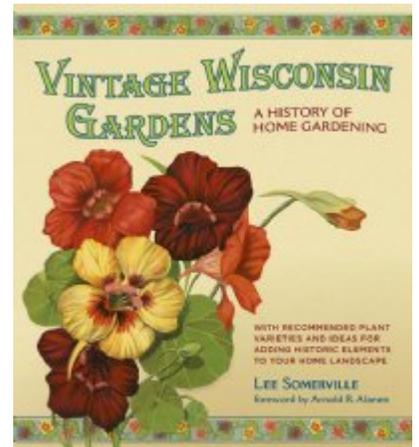
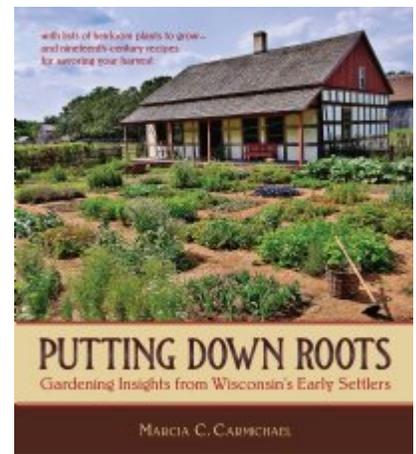
## **Vintage Wisconsin Gardens: A History of Home Gardening** by Lee Somerville

As Wisconsin's population moved from farmsteads into villages, towns, and cities, the state saw a growing interest in gardening as a leisure activity and source of civic pride. In *Vintage Wisconsin Gardens*, Lee Somerville introduces readers to the region's ornamental gardens of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, showcasing the "vernacular" gardens created by landscaping enthusiasts for their own use and pleasure.

The Wisconsin State Horticultural Society, established during the mid-nineteenth century, was the primary source of advice for home gardeners. Through carefully selected excerpts from WSHS articles, Somerville shares the excitement of these gardeners as they traded cultivation and design knowledge and explored the possibilities of their avocation. Women were frequent presenters at the WSHS annual meetings, and their voices resonate. Their writings, and those of their male colleagues, are a remarkable legacy we can draw on today—learning how Wisconsinites past created and enjoyed their gardens helps us appreciate our own. Filled with period and contemporary images, recommended plant lists, and garden layouts, *Vintage Wisconsin Gardens* will interest those curious about the history of the state's cultural landscape and inspire readers to restore or reconstruct period gardens.

Lee Somerville is a landscape historian and master gardener. Originally from Liverpool, England, her home for the past thirty-five years has been northeastern Wisconsin. Between 1985 and 2001, Somerville was a volunteer at Heritage Hill State Historical Park in Green Bay, where she helped develop garden and landscape plans and organized volunteers to maintain those gardens. She recently received her master's degree in landscape architecture from the University of Wisconsin–Madison. The research she completed for her thesis on nineteenth-century Wisconsin garden history served as the basis for this book.

Both books are available for purchase through the Wisconsin Historical Society's store: <http://shop.wisconsinhistory.org>





# Kenosha County Center AAS Display & Demonstration Garden

“Gardening is learning, learning, learning. That’s the fun of them. You’re always learning.”

Helen Mirren

In January of this year, the Kenosha County Center Demonstration Garden (a Master Gardener Project) was selected by the All-America Selections (AAS) national board as an AAS Display Garden. After months of planning and preparation... and continually learning along the way... the Display Garden has been completed!

Not only are AAS flower and vegetable winners being grown in the garden but different types of raised beds are on display, too. Educating the gardening public on how to garden successfully in our area is one of the main focuses of this project. Comparisons can be viewed between plants growing in the existing soil and those planted in amended raised beds. (You should see the difference!)

“Inside Out” is the theme of the garden...showing ways to repurpose and incorporate common household items into a garden setting. A trellis made from hangers, fabric plant ties, a rattan chair frame planter, and a wicker wash basket container garden are featured. The initial goal of the garden was to interplant edibles within the existing ornamental beds, but ideas kept emerging and creativity continued growing that the garden has now expanded into becoming an official Certified Wildlife Habitat through the National Wildlife Federation.

Through the hard work of a dedicated group of Master Gardener volunteers, the AAS Display Garden has become more than just another garden at the Kenosha County Center. Publicity generated by the UW-Extension Kenosha County website as well as area newspapers have beckoned both interested gardeners and curious spectators to stop out at the Kenosha County Center to visit the garden. The increased attendance numbers are staggering!

Since the garden is located at a public facility, the garden is open at all times. On August 4th from 4pm to 7 pm, the AAS Display Garden will be showcased at an early evening educational ..yet, fun...event. Check out the UWEX Kenosha County website for additional details and watch your e-mail box for an announcement from Jeanne Hilinske-Christensen.

## Master Gardeners Are Volunteers (Volunteers Managing Volunteers)

By MGV Marilyn Pelky

Basic tips to keep in mind when you are managing the project, site or program

- Be motivated yourself – sincerity wins over technique
- Be upbeat – volunteering should be fun!
- Keep in touch
- Email (or personally discuss) before – They may not be familiar with the exact location. Where do I park? Restrooms at facility? Attire (boots, gloves)? Tools I need to bring? Possible inclement weather (cancellations/alternatives)?
- Email (or personally discuss) after - How did it go? Were your expectations met? What could we have done to assist you better?
- Match volunteer personal expectations with needs and tasks
- Give volunteers challenging work; allow them to manage their work
- Increase volunteer responsibilities as they continue to grow in knowledge and experience – then promote them (perhaps be in charge next time)
- Let volunteers know how important they are, and how important the total project is to our community
- Thank! Thank! Thank!

# 2014 Racine Kenosha Master Gardener Association

**Volunteer hours are due in to the Racine County UW-Extension office by October 1, 2014.**

Need ideas for getting more hours? Remember to consult your bright yellow Master Gardener Handbook for Kenosha & Racine Master Gardener Volunteers – project descriptions and contact information can be found on pages 8 –14. Special opportunities may come via email, so make sure you are receiving and reading emails from the UW-Extension county offices!

Some projects are flexible in time and space, so don't think you can't volunteer just because you are busy on weekdays – think about helping with education, signage, or calling other volunteers! Many projects are in need of additional help, so don't think you can't volunteer on a new project, or one that you have not signed up for – you can! Most projects can use your special skills and talents – don't hesitate to call the contact MGV and ask if they need help! It is okay to work on projects on an interim basis – just let the project coordinator know your plans.

Thank you all for your contributions; your MGV service is very impactful in our communities and is appreciated by all!

## 2014 Racine/Kenosha Master Gardener Association Program Schedule

*Business meeting starts at 6:30 p.m.; educational program starts at 7:15 p.m. Tour start time TBA.*

Date	Location	Speaker	Topic
July 28	Tour	Patti Nagai & MGVs	Racine MGV Projects Tour
	The Teaching Garden, Garden of Giving and the horticulture therapy program at Lakeside Curative		
August 25	Kenosha	Mary Beth Mahoney Master Composter	Composting Methods
Sept. 22	Racine	Christy Marsden UW-Extension Rock County, Horticulture Educator	Seed Saving
October 27	Kenosha	Jeanne Hillinske – Christensen UW-Extension Kenosha County, Horticulture Educator	Rejuvenating an "Old" Garden
Nov.17	Racine	Tracy Hankwitz Burlington Garden Center	Care of Holiday Plants
Dec. 15	Kenosha	Holiday Pot Luck	Graduation, Awards & Gift Exchange

**\*Racine:** SCJ iMET Center is located in Renaissance Park on Highway H (between Hwys 11 and 20)

**Program Location:** **SC Johnson iMET Center**  
2320 Renaissance Blvd  
Sturtevant, WI 53177  
(262) 898-7500

**Program Info:** Racine Co. UW-Extension  
209 North Main Street  
Burlington, WI 53105  
(262) 767-2929

**\*\*Kenosha:** Kenosha County Center is located on the NE corner of highways 50 and 45

**Program Location & Information:** Kenosha County UW-Extension  
19600 75th Street, Suite 2, Bristol, WI 53104  
(262) 857-1945

