

# The Latest Dirt

La Porte County Master Gardener Newsletter



FEBRUARY 2019

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### 2019 MEETING SCHEDULE

Meetings will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Thursdays at the Purdue Extension Office (O) unless otherwise noted

February 7	Workshop
March 7	Business Meeting
April 4	Awards Banquet Red Mill Park
May 2	Business Meeting
June 6	Workshop
July 2	Business Meeting
August 1	Joint Picnic/Workshop Red Mill Park
September 5	Business Meeting
October 3	Workshop
November 7	Business Meeting Annual Elections
December	Holiday Dinner

"THE LATEST DIRT" is published monthly. The next deadline is: February 20, 2019



[www.facebook.com/MasterGardenersOfLaPorteCountyIndiana](http://www.facebook.com/MasterGardenersOfLaPorteCountyIndiana)

[www.lpmastergardener.com](http://www.lpmastergardener.com)



## Snow Is Good for Gardens

By: Rose Lerner

Extension Consumer Horticulturist, Purdue University

Though your aching back may not agree, recent heavy snows actually will be good for your garden and landscape. Snow provides moisture as well as protection from cold and wind.



Photo credit: Rosie Lerner

Snow is an excellent insulator against low temperatures and excessive winds. The extent of protection depends on the depth of snow. In addition, the soil gives off some heat so that the temperature at the soil surface can be much warmer than the air temperature. One study found that the soil surface temperature was 28°F with a 9-inch snow depth and an air temperature of -14°F!

Snow brings welcome moisture to many landscape plants, which will in turn help prevent desiccation injury. Even dormant plants continue to lose moisture from twigs (as water vapor) in the process known as transpiration. Evergreen plants, which keep their leaves through the winter, are at even greater risk of injury.

On the other hand, it is possible to have too much of a good thing. Some evergreens will suffer from too much snow load. The weight of snow and ice can bend or even break branches, particularly on multi-stemmed shrubs, such as arborvitae. If needed, snow should be gently removed by brushing away with a broom or rake. Do not try to remove ice, since it is more than likely that you will break the stems. Multi-stemmed shrubs that are known to be susceptible to breakage can be bound with twine to hold branches together to prevent them from splitting apart.

Of course, there's still more winter to come before we'll know how well our plants fare. In the meantime, rest assured that there really is a silver lining to this storm cloud.

## ASSOCIATION NEWS

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### Spring Garden Show Update

By: Ann Klosinski

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The March 23<sup>rd</sup> show is fast approaching. We're just getting a start on filling the volunteer positions so please use the sign-up sheets at the February meeting and fill in the slot(s) you want to work in. It's a great and fun way to get in a few volunteer hours. Hopefully you'll be able to reserve some down time and attend one or more of the educational sessions too. This year, Master Gardeners who volunteer a minimum of 4 hours are not required to purchase a ticket.

We can use help soliciting donations for the basket raffle. Wendy Shafer will have ideas of what we need. Also, we are still accepting sponsorships, ads and vendors. Direct any leads to Ann Klosinski so we can get the information to them. Pass the word and share the excitement about the show with friends, family and neighbors. There will be fliers at the meeting for you to take.

An article in this edition of the newsletter talks about social media, both Facebook and our web site, where you will find more details about the show. Posts and updates will be made as new information is available, so check back frequently. Using social media will enable us to reach many more people and to increase attendance.

Susan Martin is our Keynote Speaker and will present two talks: "Lessons Learned Under Trees," and "If You Could Only Pick One: Perennial Gold Standards." We have some exciting programs for the adults this year including a take home planting activity using Succulents. Linda Strain and Karen Sarver expanded the children's schedule with additional activities exclusive for them. Marcy Dailey will present "Plant This, Not That;" Doreen and Mike King will talk about "Peace, Love and Lavender." Other sessions include "Bee Keeping 101," "A Lavender Farmer's Story," and "Gardening the Natural Way." There will also be a

Children's Yoga Class and a Children's Animal Wildlife. Country Caterers will be the food vendor this year, along with a variety of vendors. For complete details go to:

**[www.lpmastergardener.com](http://www.lpmastergardener.com)**

Thank you for your help in promoting our 2019 Spring Garden Show...its success depends on you and the entire La Porte County Master Gardener Association.

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### Social Media

By: Ann Klosinski

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The goal of the Master Gardeners is to reach out to the home gardener. Social media is an important and key factor in maximizing the number of people who will benefit. Here are some Facebook statistics compiled for December 28<sup>th</sup> to January 24<sup>th</sup>

- 3.4K users were reached - a 448% increase over the last month
- 444 users engaged with our pages, either by liking or sharing them – a 318% increase
- 18 new page likes – a 125% increase

Currently the page has 512 "Likes". Just think of what we could accomplish if every one of our members who use Facebook invited all their friends to like "Master Gardeners of La Porte County, Indiana"! We have also posted an event for the Spring Garden Show. Invite all your friends...we need to see our attendance numbers grow. So far, 42 people indicate they are going and 446 are interested in the event. By using these resources we can take advantage of FREE advertising.

Webmaster, Russ Klosinski reports in 2018 the La Porte County Master Gardener website had 12,285 unique visitors viewing 33,411 pages for an average of 2.72 pages per visit.

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## FEBRUARY WORKSHOP

Thursday, February 7 – 6:00 p.m. CST Social Time; 6:30 p.m. CST Meeting begins  
 La Porte County Extension Office  
 By: Chris Svoboda

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The featured speaker for the February 7<sup>th</sup> Workshop LPCMGA Meeting will be Mike Tuholski of Tuholski Produce. Tuholski Produce was recently established in La Porte, Indiana by Mike and Becca Tuholski as a local sustainable produce business. Mike has a bachelor's degree in Biology from Indiana University and a Master's degree in genetics and currently teaches biology at La Porte High School. Becca has a master's degree in public health and teaches nutrition and wellness at La Porte High School and is a local expert in food insecurity and farm to school programs. Mike will be talking to us about how to apply science to growing food sustainably and efficiently. Master Gardeners can receive 1 education hour by attending.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

### Builders Association of La Porte County 2019 Home and Lifestyle Expo

By: Donna Pouzar

As discussed at the January meeting, the LPCMGA will once again participate in the Builders' Association of La Porte County Home and Lifestyle Expo on March 2 and 3 at the Blue Chip Casino in the Hotel Event Center. The show is open on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and on Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



Like last year, we will have a panel of Master Gardeners available to answer questions from participating attendees. There will be two 3-hour shifts each day, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. We would like to have 4-5 Master Gardeners for each shift.

For the Master Gardener Table, there will be three (3) 2-hour shifts each day: 10:00 a.m. to Noon; Noon-2:00 p.m.; 2:00-4:00 p.m. Volunteers may also answer questions about the Master Gardener program and general gardening question. It will also be a wonderful venue to promote our Spring Garden Show later that month.

If you are interested, you can give me a call or email me. There will also be sign-up sheets at the February meeting.

This is a great time to get your volunteer hours early. Those of you who are mentors, this is a great opportunity to volunteer with your mentee.

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### Michigan City Farmers' Market Coordinator

By: Wendy Shafer



Master Gardeners, we need a coordinator for the Michigan City Farmers' Market. We have a table every other weekend where we are available to answer any gardening questions. There is a tent to sit under, so there is no sitting out in the sun. It's a great way to get to know people in the neighborhood, enjoy some fresh produce shopping, and show off your garden knowledge. Dennis Brittain will be happy to help get you going. Please contact me if you would like to volunteer for this project.

**La Porte County Master Gardener  
Association General Meeting  
January 3, 2019**

Wendy Shafer, President, called the meeting to order at 6:30p.m.

Susan Keiffer gave the treasurer's report.

There wasn't a secretary's report because the December meeting was the Christmas Dinner.

The following items were discussed:

- If interested in helping at the Plein Air Painter's day event, contact Tina DeWitt.
- Chris Svoboda will coordinate the La Porte Farmer's Market Q&A table. Michigan City Farmer's Market still needs a coordinator.
- The 2019 board members were introduced.
- Wendy Shafer asked each Project Coordinator to introduce themselves, talk about their project and to state their volunteer needs.
- Meijer's is donating succulents for the Garden Show. Several volunteers will be needed to assist with potting and answering questions. The donation amounts to about \$1,000.
- The Rain Garden on Wabash St. in Michigan City will need volunteers to help with weeding and cleanup from May through October.

Tina DeWitt demonstrated the use of MG Manager for online recording of volunteer and education hours. There are new drop downs, sign ups for volunteering, training tabs for State.

Gene Matzat introduced the new interns.

Gene also had a "test" to see if we knew what is and what is not allowed for volunteer and educational hours. There will be a change in the number of hours required for Master Gardener certification. As of 2019, 40 education hours plus 40 volunteer hours will be needed instead of the 35 hours in past years.

New Educational hours for Gold levels are now as follows:

Gold Level 2,000-2,000 vol hrs, now 150 ed hrs  
 Gold Level 3,000-3,000 vol hrs, now 200 ed hrs  
 Gold Level 4,000-4,000 vol hrs, now 250 ed hrs  
 Gold Level 5,000-5,000 vol hrs, now 300 ed hrs

To maintain their certification, Master Gardeners need to have at least 12 volunteer hours and 6 education hours annually plus sign the volunteer form. Recorded webinar classes on a variety of topics may be used for education hours.

New Prairie put in a new green house; do we have any contacts?

Donna Pouzar shared that Master Gardeners were asked again to participate in the La Porte County Builders' Association Home and Lifestyle Expo on March 2 and 3. We participated the last two years, and she explained that we will have a table at no charge. Rather than having individual speakers, we will have a panel of Master Gardeners to answer questions from participating attendees. Both days will have 3, two-hour shifts and it will be a great venue to promote our Spring Garden Show. Susan Keiffer made motion to participate, Kathy Staninger seconded the motion. The motion carried. Volunteers will be needed to be on the panel.

Gene's Gems:

- Please read "The Latest Dirt" for opportunities for volunteer hours.
- Community/Heritage gardens growing together. Educators need to fill out mini grant for multiple projects for \$1,000. It will be used to teach and to use food for food bank.
- *Growing thru Leadership* sessions are February 7 through March 7 (5 weeks) on Thursdays.
- *Indiana Small Farm Conference* will be held on February 28 to March 1 in Danville, IN. A variety of topics of interest for small farmers.
- *Midwest Women in Agriculture* conference on Feb 19 through 21. Different sessions at Swan Lake Golf Resort near Plymouth, IN. Included is an 8-hour training on produce food safety and another 8-hour session on mental health first aid. Registration and other information are on the La Porte County Extension website.
- *Breakfast with a Forester* on January 15 at Round the Clock restaurant in La Porte. Each month info on trees and forest management is shared over breakfast in different towns. DNR district forester James Potthoff usually attends along with other private foresters.

Meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.



## EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

### Master Gardeners Invited to “Grow Through Leadership”

Master Gardeners, both interns and those certified, are invited to take “the next step” in their gardening experience – participate in a leadership development training designed especially for Master Gardeners. This training series will be held at the La Porte County Extension office on five consecutive Thursdays from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. CST (Feb. 7 through March 7).

Participants will learn about the nature of leadership and how to better communicate, working with others, leading groups and running effective meetings, and managing conflict. The first session will explore your personality type and those of others and what that means for interacting. Participants will learn from personal experiences, small group activities, discussions, online leadership modules and real-life applications.

Botanical Gardens and Master Gardener Seminar Information			
<b>Fernwood Botanical Gardens</b>	<a href="http://www.fernwoodbotanical.org">www.fernwoodbotanical.org</a> LPCMGA is a member of Fernwood Botanical Gardens. Membership card can be signed out at the Extension Office.		
<b>Gabis Arboretum at Purdue NW</b>	<a href="https://www.pnw.edu/gabis-arboretum">https://www.pnw.edu/gabis-arboretum</a>		
<b>Friendship Botanic Gardens</b>	<a href="http://www.friendshipgardens.org">www.friendshipgardens.org</a>		
Advanced Master Gardener Training			
Master Gardener Seminars			
Click on this link for more information on these events. <a href="https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/events/">https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/events/</a>			
Date	Event/Time/Fee	Description	Location / Contact
Tuesday, Feb. 19	<i>Friends of Potato Creek State Park</i> meeting 7:00 p.m. EST/6:00 p.m. CST; no entrance fee	Mitch Yaciw, Gardens Manager at Unity Gardens, South Bend, will discuss <i>Attracting Pollinators</i>	Potato Creek State Park Nature Center, 25601 State Hwy 4, North Liberty, IN Info at <a href="http://www.extension.purdue.edu/laporte">www.extension.purdue.edu/laporte</a>
Saturday, Feb. 16	<i>Gardening: More than Just Plants</i> 8:30 am to 3:30 pm EST Registration: \$45/person	Whitley Co MG 6 <sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium with topics on art, landscaping, pollinator protection & birdscaping. Vendors & lunch.	Indian Springs Middle School (activities entrance), 1692 S. SR 9, Columbia City, IN Flyer at <a href="http://www.extension.purdue.edu/laporte">www.extension.purdue.edu/laporte</a>
Saturday, Feb. 23	<i>Elkhart Garden Expo</i> 8 am to 4:30 pm EST Tickets: \$10	Michiana Master Gardeners Ass'n presents a day of educational workshops, speakers and garden vendors. A food court will be on site.	Elkhart County Fairgrounds 17746 County Road 34, Goshen, IN Flyer at <a href="http://www.extension.purdue.edu/laporte">www.extension.purdue.edu/laporte</a>



**Purdue Master Gardener Study Abroad 2019**  
**Gardens of Ireland - July 16 - 27, 2019\***  
 Garden and Landscape History in Ireland and Northern Ireland  
 (\*arrival in Ireland July 17)

**Enrollment opened on**  
**Tuesday, December 4, 2018.**

See page 6 for more details.

You can enroll online or by calling (see the brochure for details.) Enrollment will be first come, first serve and we will establish a wait list once we reach max enrollment of 25 people. Purdue Master Gardeners and our program alums will receive advanced notice of enrollment opportunity.

The program brochure is available at:

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/MGStudyAbroad/>

#### **Registration Fee**

\$3,675 per person, double occupancy

\$4,275 per person, single occupancy

We are really excited about this all NEW itinerary focused on gardens in the Irish counties of Wicklow, Waterford, Cork, Kerry, and Kildare, as well as near Belfast in Northern Ireland.

We will visit such notable sites as Powerscourt, Killruddery, Mount Usher, Mount Stewart, Heywood Garden, Lismore Castle, Ballymaloe Cookery School & Garden, Inaculin, Bantry House, Muckross House, and the Japanese Gardens at the Irish National Stud.

As we have been doing in recent years, we will meet up as a group at a hotel near the airport (Dublin). However, we will NOT be including any free time in Dublin in this program. You will have a free day in nearby Bray and can take the commuter train or bus to Dublin if desired. If you wish to have additional Dublin days, you should consider extending your stay or starting early.

Sláinte!

Rosie and Mike

Dr. Michael N. Dana, Professor of Horticulture, Voice: 765.494.5923; email: [dana@purdue.edu](mailto:dana@purdue.edu)

Rosie Lerner, Consumer Horticulture Specialist, Voice: 765.494.1311; email: [rosie@purdue.edu](mailto:rosie@purdue.edu)



### **Brown Bag Series 2019**

#### **Session #2 - Attracting Wildlife and Native Plants**

February 13, 6:00-7:00 p.m. CST

Michigan City Public Library, 100 E. 4th St. Michigan City, IN.

As we move closer together in our increasingly spreading urban areas, native wildlife is being squeezed out and finding nothing to live on in our sterile landscapes. Scientists call the new close-cropped lawns, surrounded by exotic plantings, a food desert for wildlife. Wildlife can only feed on the plants they share an evolutionary history with, and the new exotics don't suit those needs at all.

Donna Pouzar will talk about the National Wildlife Federation's Backyard Wildlife Habitat Program. This is a program that defines the needs of wildlife and how you can turn your yard into a Certified Wildlife Backyard Habitat.

Native plants have formed symbiotic relationships with native wildlife over thousands of years, and therefore, offer the most sustainable habitat. A plant is considered native if it has occurred naturally in a particular region, ecosystem, or habitat without human introduction. They thrive in the soils, moisture and weather of your region. This means less watering, which can be wasteful, and pest problems that require toxic chemicals.

Laura Henderson will speak about the benefits of planting native plants for both wildlife and the home gardener.

## GARDEN ARTICLES

### Nothing to Cry About

By: Sharon Cholewa



The exact origin of the onion is unknown. Because onion tissue leaves little or no trace, there is no definitive conclusion about the exact location. Some food historians believe the whole family of onions originated in central Asia where wild onions presently grow, while other research suggests Iran and West Pakistan. But it may have grown wild all over the world and cultivated simultaneously. Most historians agree the onion has been cultivated for 5000 years or more; before written language or sophisticated tools. It's very likely that the onion was a staple in the prehistoric diet.

Those familiar round bulbs belong to the *Allium cepa* genus that is part of the lily family. There are 325 species of onions, 70 of which grow in North America. The allium family includes onions, shallots, green onions (often called scallions), chives, leeks and garlic.

Onions were one of the earliest crops cultivated because they were transportable, less perishable, easy to grow, and could be grown in a variety of soils and climates and sustained human life. These basic abilities of onions also proved to be very useful to Egyptians, Babylonians, Hindu and ancient Chinese civilizations who had problems creating large sources of food for the poor. Onions prevented thirst and could be dried and preserved for use when food might be scarce. Ancient texts describe its importance as food, medicine, in mummification, and its use in art.

(continued on page 8)

#### 2019 EXECUTIVE BOARD

PRESIDENT	WENDY SHAFER
VICE PRESIDENT	CHRIS SVOBODA
SECRETARY	LINDA HOUGH
TREASURER	SUSAN KIEFFER
ED. COMMITTEE/ SPEAKERS BUREAU	CHRIS SVOBODA PAULA NEVERS ESTELLE PAWLOSKI GEORGE SARVER MIKE ALTMAN
PAST PRESIDENT	ANN KLOSINSKI

#### 2019 PROJECT COORDINATORS

##### AG Days

Lisa Gerardi \_\_\_\_\_ 219-262-5146  
\_\_\_\_\_ [kaliherbs2011@gmail.com](mailto:kaliherbs2011@gmail.com)

##### Brown Bag Gardening Series

Karren Coplen \_\_\_\_\_ 219-390-4118  
\_\_\_\_\_ [karrenc@comcast.net](mailto:karrenc@comcast.net)

##### Farmers' Market – La Porte

Chris Svoboda \_\_\_\_\_ 614-377-6409  
\_\_\_\_\_ [svoboda.christina@att.net](mailto:svoboda.christina@att.net)

##### Farmers' Market - Michigan City

TBA \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

##### Habitat for Humanity

Donna Allen \_\_\_\_\_ 219-873-1007  
\_\_\_\_\_ [dallen0226@hotmail.com](mailto:dallen0226@hotmail.com)

##### Niemann School/Head Start

Beverly Johnson \_\_\_\_\_ 219-873-7907  
\_\_\_\_\_ [bev3111@aol.com](mailto:bev3111@aol.com)

##### Pioneer Heritage Days

Lisa Gerardi \_\_\_\_\_ 219-262-5146  
\_\_\_\_\_ [kaliherbs2011@gmail.com](mailto:kaliherbs2011@gmail.com)

##### Pioneer Heritage Garden

Connie Shei \_\_\_\_\_ 219-362-4866  
\_\_\_\_\_ [jshei@comcast.net](mailto:jshei@comcast.net)

##### Social Media

George Sarver \_\_\_\_\_ 219-733-9983  
\_\_\_\_\_ [sarver@csinet.net](mailto:sarver@csinet.net)

##### Sunflower Fair

Megan Countryman \_\_\_\_\_ 574-532-8480  
\_\_\_\_\_ [mcountry46552@gmail.com](mailto:mcountry46552@gmail.com)

##### Symposium/Garden Show

Ann Klosinski \_\_\_\_\_ 219-872-8367  
\_\_\_\_\_ [annak47@comcast.net](mailto:annak47@comcast.net)  
Eunice Conway \_\_\_\_\_ 219-778-2400  
\_\_\_\_\_ [tconway5971@comcast.net](mailto:tconway5971@comcast.net)

##### Wabash Street Rain Gardens

Laura Henderson \_\_\_\_\_ 219-871-9896  
\_\_\_\_\_ [lhendeliz@yahoo.com](mailto:lhendeliz@yahoo.com)

#### NEXT BOARD MEETING

February 11th - Extension Office - 4:30 p.m.

Throughout ancient history, onions were intended as food for the poor. The ancient law of Mesopotamia, dated back to about 1754 BCE, shows great concern for the needy by providing them a monthly ration of bread and onions, the basis of the peasant diet, which they devoured raw. The upper class tuned up their noses at the disgusting odor. In many countries Priests were forbidden to eat onions. Those in high positions detested them.

Onions can be traced back to 3500 BCE in Egypt where they were revered by the poor. Paintings of onions appear on structures, in pyramids and in tombs, and were depicted on banquet tables during great feasts. Onions were offered on alters of the gods and were part of burial ceremonies. To the Egyptians, its concentric ring structure represented eternal life. Onions were buried with each of the pharaohs, possibly, because it was believed that their strong odor had magical powers and would induce the dead to breathe again, or because onions were known for their strong antiseptic qualities and would be handy in the afterlife.

Written records from the 1<sup>st</sup> millennia BCE to the early centuries CE show the onion's popularity grew. They were described several times by the Israelites in the Bible. In Ancient Greece, Dioscorides, a physician in 1<sup>st</sup> c CE, noted several medicinal uses of onions. Before Olympic Games, the Greek athletes consumed pounds of onions, drank its juice and rubbed onions on their bodies for strength. As early as the 6<sup>th</sup> c in India, the medical treatise Charaka Samhita (oldest and the most authentic treatise on Ayurveda and is the ancient medical science of India) hailed the onion as a diuretic, good for digestion, the heart, the eyes, and the joints.

The Romans ate onions regularly and carried them on their conquests throughout England and Germany. Pliny the Elder wrote about the effectiveness of the onion to cure vision, induce sleep, and heal mouth sores, dog bite, toothaches, dysentery, and lumbago. In the ruins of Rome, archaeologists found the gardens where onions had grown, just as Pliny had described. The bulbs left behind telltale cavities in the ground. The Roman gourmet, Apicius, credited with writing one of the first cookbooks which dates to the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> c CE, did not feature onions in recipes for the wealthy but used them in sauces or to enhance a dish.

By the middle ages the three main vegetables of European cuisines were beans, cabbage, and onions. During that time, not only did onions serve as food for the poor and the aristocracy as well, onions were used medicinally. Onions were often more valuable than money and were used as rent payment and wedding gifts.

On his second voyage to Haiti, 1493-1494, Columbus brought varieties of cultivated onions to the New World. There were some native wild onions growing in America, but they didn't compare to the intense flavor of the European varieties. The Indians were eager to accept these new onions.

America's native tree onions and nodding onions provided nourishment to Pere Marquette, a French Jesuit and missionary and explorer, in 1624 when starvation threatened during his exploration from Green Bay to Lake Michigan's southern shore. The City of Chicago, a region where wild onions grew in abundance, received its name from the Indian word that described the odor of onions.

If it hadn't been for the onion, the civil war might have turned out differently. General Ulysses S. Grant, who headed the Union Forces, sent a note to the War Department that read, "I will not move my troops without onions." He promptly received three cartloads. Grant also used the juice of onions medicinally as a wound healer.

Sources:

Zel and Ruben Allen, *Onion Aficionados Weep*  
<https://www.onions-usa.org>



## February Garden Calendar

By: B. Rosie Lerner,  
Extension Consumer Horticulturist, Purdue University

### 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 (Flowers, vegetables and small fruits)

- 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 growing 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.

#### Standing Committee Coordinators

History Book \_\_\_\_\_ Wendy Shafer  
Hospitality \_\_\_\_\_ Eunice Conway  
Librarian \_\_\_\_\_ Karren Coplen  
Newsletter \_\_\_\_\_ Donna Pouzar  
Speakers Bureau \_\_\_\_\_ See Executive Board  
Sunshine \_\_\_\_\_ Bev Johnson  
Website \_\_\_\_\_ Russ Klosinski/Geri Lamb

**Purdue Extension Office** \_\_\_\_\_ 324-9407  
Gene Matzat \_\_\_\_\_ [ematzat@purdue.edu](mailto:ematzat@purdue.edu)  
Tina DeWitt \_\_\_\_\_ [dewitt8@purdue.edu](mailto:dewitt8@purdue.edu)

*The Latest Dirt* is published monthly. The deadline for submission is the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month. Our mission is to publish articles and events of interest to other Master Gardeners and the community. Articles about personal experiences, suggestions on gardening books, catalogs, helpful websites, tips and tricks, book reviews, seminars you've attended are welcomed.

Submission requirements: Articles should be no longer than a page and can include photos. References must be included. Latin names of plants should be italicized. We do not accept articles pertaining to medicinal information. Master Gardeners will get volunteer hours for time spent working on an article.

#### Buy, Sell, Trade at the *Trading Shed*

Have a garden item for sale or trade?

Place your free ad in *The Latest Dirt*.

What better place to reach gardeners than this? Tools, tillers, mowers, plants, or anything garden related. Keep ads brief and don't forget your phone number and/or e-mail address. Ads will be limited to space available.

Send ads, photos, events or articles by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month to either:

**DONNAPOUZAR@COMCAST.NET**  
**EMATZAT@PURDUE.EDU**

PURDUE UNIVERSITY, INDIANA COUNTIES  
AND U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
COOPERATING AN AFFIRMATIVE  
ACTION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY INSTITUTION