

Let my words, like vegetables, be tender and sweet, for tomorrow I may have to eat them.

— Author Unknown

# Garden Thyme

July 2020

<https://extension.purdue.edu/porter>

Volume 6, Issue 4



## Notes from Nikky

By Nicole "Nikky" Witkowski

Purdue Extension Educator, Agriculture & Natural Resources

Wow! It's been quite a year. Hopefully you have gotten updates from me with information about policies for the Purdue Extension Master Gardener Program. As a reminder: the biggest one is that you are not required, according to the state, to submit volunteer hours this year to stay active. If you can still find ways through working virtually on committees or doing work days that are socially distanced, that is still great! It is understood this is not always easy and doable, so please don't do

something you are uncomfortable with during this time.

This policy addressed volunteer hours, not education hours. The state isn't fully excusing those since there can be virtual options. I am lowering your requirement to only needing 3 hours of education. I still don't feel it's appropriate yet to drop that requirement totally since there are so many options of virtual programs and due to programs that were offered prior to the shutdown. I am also hopeful we will have some programs in the fall. However, if you feel you are unable to do them, please just let me know, and I am more than willing to work with everyone in that circumstance as well.

### EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

The Purdue website has added a link to numerous on-line education opportunities:

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/education-hours-opportunities/>

Growing for this year: I do expect to see some problems from frozen plants trying to recover as I know I keep watching to see if my Bleeding Heart will recover or not. I think I just don't get to see it flower. Keep watching how we get hot then cold. You may need to water due to heat, but don't water so much that your plants get cold when it cools off, especially at night. For example, most vegetables planted won't appreciate temps in the 50's and being wet as well won't help them. Good luck with the growing season as it continues!



### IN THIS ISSUE

Notes from Nikky	1
Meet a Master Gardener—Susan Silverstein	2
My Plant; My Project—Hydrangea Tree	3
Indiana's Terrestrial Invasive Species Rule	4
Crafty Creations—DIY Leaf Birdbaths	5
Recibees—Blueberry Zucchini Snack Cake	6
Nature Watch—Survivor: Monarch Butterflies	7
Garden Games—Backyard Disc Golf	8



# Garden Thyme

July 2020

Volume 6, Issue 4

## Meet a Master Gardener

By Susan Silverstein, PCMG Class 2019

A goal I had when I decided to retire from 47 years of nursing was to become a Master Gardener. The first thing I did was to sign up for the Porter County Master Gardener Class in 2019. Gardening was always a passionate hobby of mine. In fact, at one point I considered changing careers to be a landscape designer, taking 12 hours of horticulture classes at the College of DuPage. At the Elmhurst Greenhouse I volunteered and also assisted Boy Scouts on any horticulture project for their Eagle Scout Badge.

After my Master Gardener Class in 2019, I volunteered at the Gabis Arboretum and the Porter County Hospice Center garden. Getting in the mud, cleaning up flower beds and planting is very enjoyable for me. I am looking forward to volunteer in those two areas again.

Now since I had time during the quarantine, I am also designing my own garden at home. Starting seeds in my small green house has been a thrill, especially to see the little cotyledons\* spring up. A favorite pastime is planting flower pots for color to place on the front steps of the house and the back patio. I am also learning how and what to plant in shady areas, which is challenging.

I recently joined the Publicity and Promotion committee for the Garden Walk, which unfortunately was cancelled for 2020. I am looking forward to meeting more Master Gardeners in our association, getting to know them, and learning from them as well.

*\*Editor's note:*

*cot-y-le-don*

*/kəde'leɪdn/ an embryonic leaf in seed-bearing plants, one or more of which are the first leaves to appear from a germinating seed.*





# Garden Thyme

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Volume 6, Issue 4

## Hydrangea Trees Anyone?

By Suzanna Tudor,  
PCMG Class of 2002

Sometimes accidents create inspiration. That is the case with my *Hydrangea paniculata* 'Mystical Flame.' The accident involved the collapse of rain barrels placed next to the hydrangea, slashing my unfortunate paniculata in half. A bit later, however, out shot a new, healthy stem—straight up. For a couple of years, lower branches continued to grow, unfortunately maintaining a rather lopsided appearance. Then I noticed a hydran-

gea tree (standard) in my neighbor's newly planted landscape. That sure looked like something I could do with my rain barrel victim. This spring, lower branches were pruned off the main stalk entirely. Currently, without having to nourish its lower level, the leaves have grown large and healthy with the prospect of beautiful blooms to come.

Should you want to try this, look through your shrub and choose a dominant straight stem and pinch off the top inch. Temporary staking may be necessary. Prune off all lower branches in early spring. If new growth sprouts from the base, remove those also. To prevent top overgrowth, prune to two or three

nodes in early spring. Always keep soil moist and feed a couple of times annually, once right after pruning and again after blooming. There's lots available online for further details.

Whether by "accident," or just want to tame an overgrown hydrangea, or desire the look of a hydrangea tree without forking over \$100 or more, you may want to give this a try. To be continued...



*Rain barrel victim's lopsided growth*



*Hydrangea after March pruning*



*New hydrangea tree's latest growth*





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Volume 6, Issue 4

## Indiana's Terrestrial Invasive Species Rule

Are you aware of the Invasive Terrestrial Plant Rule which took effect April of 2020 in Indiana? *The rule states with respect to the 44 plant species included on the rule: that "a person must not: (1) Sell, offer or grow for sale, gift, barter, exchange, or distribute a species; (2) Transport or transfer a species; or (3) Introduce a species.*

### What is an Invasive Species?

An Invasive Species is defined in Executive Order 13112 as "an alien species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health." These species often change their habitats by outcompeting native species for the resources needed to survive. The result is loss of diversity and degradation of natural habitats.

### What damage do invasive species do?

Invasive species often displace native species, reducing diversity and degrading the habitats in which they have been introduced. These invaders have negative effects on property values, agricultural yields, public utilities, recreation, and tourism.

### What does the Terrestrial Plant Rule restrict?

These plants are not to be sold, gifted, bartered, exchanged, distributed, transported or introduced in Indiana. Currently there is no mandate to eradicate existing plantings in nurseries, landscapes, or forested areas.

**The following are prohibited invasive terrestrial plants and are declared pests or pathogens regulated under this section:**

- (1) *Achyranthes japonica* (Japanese chaff flower).
- (2) *Ailanthus altissima* (tree of heaven)
- (3) *Alliaria petiolata* (garlic mustard)
- (4) *Alnus glutinosa* (black alder)
- (5) *Artemisia vulgaris* (mugwort)
- (6) *Arthraxon hispidus* (small carpgrass)
- (7) *Berberis thunbergii* (Japanese barberry)
- (8) *Carduus acanthoides* (spiny plumeless thistle)
- (9) *Carduus nutans* (musk thistle)

- (10) *Celastrus orbiculatus* (Asian bittersweet)
- (11) *Centaurea stoebe* (spotted knapweed)
- (12) *Cirsium vulgare* (bull thistle)
- (13) *Conium maculatum* (poison hemlock)
- (14) *Convolvulus arvensis* (field bindweed)
- (15) *Coronilla varia* (crown vetch)
- (16) *Dioscorea polystachya (oppositifolia)* (Chinese yam)
- (17) *Dipsacus fullonum* (common teasel)
- (18) *Dipsacus laciniatus* (cut-leaved teasel)
- (19) *Elaeagnus umbellata* (autumn olive)
- (20) *Euonymus fortunei* (wintercreeper)
- (21) *Euphorbia esula* (leafy spurge)
- (22) *Frangula alnus* (glossy buckthorn)
- (23) *Hesperis matronalis* (dame's rocket)
- (24) *Humulus japonicus* (Japanese hops)
- (25) *Lepidium latifolium* (pepperweed)
- (26) *Lespedeza cuneata* (sericea lespedeza)
- (27) *Ligustrum obtusifolium* (blunt-leaved privet)
- (28) *Lonicera japonica* (Japanese honeysuckle)
- (29) *Lonicera maackii* (Amur honeysuckle)
- (30) *Lonicera morrowii* (Morrow's honeysuckle)
- (31) *Lonicera tatarica* (Tatarian honeysuckle)
- (32) *Lonicera x bella* (Bell's honeysuckle)
- (33) *Microstegium vimineum* (Japanese stiltgrass)
- (34) *Morus alba* (white mulberry)
- (35) *Phalaris arundinacea* (reed canarygrass)
- (36) *Phellodendron amurense* (Amur cork tree)
- (37) *Phragmites australis subspecies australis* (common reed)
- (38) *Polygonum perfoliatum* (mile-a-minute vine)
- (39) *Reynoutria japonica* (Japanese knotweed)
- (40) *Reynoutria sachalinensis* (giant knotweed)
- (41) *Reynoutria x bohemica* (Bohemian knotweed)
- (42) *Rhamnus cathartica* (common buckthorn)
- (43) *Vincetoxicum nigrum* (black swallow-wort)
- (44) *Vincetoxicum rossicum* (pale swallow-wort)

Alternatives for invasives: <https://www.extension.purdue.edu/extmedia/ID/ID-464-W.pdf>

For more information on the rule and invasive species:

<https://www.in.gov/dnr/naturepreserve/4736.htm>

<https://www.entm.purdue.edu/iisc/>

# Garden Thyme

July 2020

Volume 6, Issue 4



*A beautiful fountain with a lounging frog*

## DIY Leaf Birdbaths

By Suzanna Tudor  
PCMG Class of 2002

Are you game to try a new craft while staying in place? My sister, Pat Buller, has been making concrete, leaf birdbaths for the past fifteen years. These colorful, one-of-a-kind creations can be made in your own back yard, using a large leaf, contractor's sand, Portland cement and concrete fortifier, and then painted in variety of colors and sealed. Add a solar fountain, and you have show stopper.

The first step is choosing a large leaf, at least 10 inches long and 7 inches wide. Pat uses rhubarb and elephant-ear leaves. Play sand is poured into a pile on a work surface and then wet until it sticks together. Shape the pile to the size of the leaf, but not more than a couple of inches high, as birds do not like anything more than two inches deep. They prefer their feet touching the bottom. Place leaf vein-side up on top of sand.

Next, water, contractor's sand and Portland cement are mixed to a thick batter. Apply to the center of the leaf, spreading handfuls at a time to the edges, slowly patting hard to release air bubbles and building up the thickness of the casting to ½-1-inches at least for strength. The mixture should be covered with plastic and possibly misted to prevent drying and cracking.

Projects should dry slowly for three days, then peel off leaf. Casting needs to thoroughly dry for a week, then paint and seal. Krylon paint dries nontoxic and then seal.

Voila!! Welcome, little feathered friends.



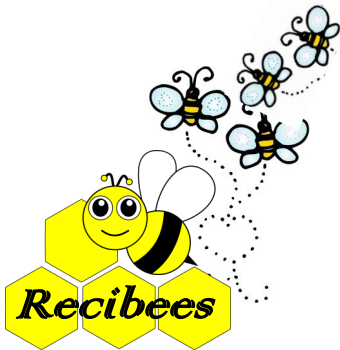
*Birdbaths were sold at Shipshewana last summer.*

Crafty Creations

# Garden Thyme

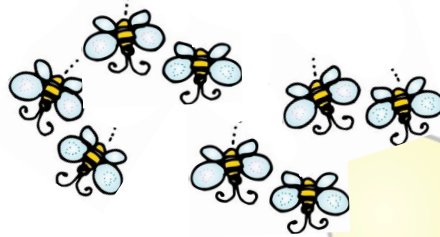
July 2020

Volume 6, Issue 4



By Wilma Willard,  
PCMG Class of 2011

What will you do with all those zucchinis that your prolific plants blessed you with (or all those zucchinis that your nice neighbor blessed you with?) Here's a new twist on a snack cake packed with yummy summer flavors that can solve your zucchini dilemma -- deliciously! Ice it or eat it plain. So moist. So yummy!



## Blueberry Zucchini Snack Cake with Lemon Buttercream Icing

This easy snack cake combines the best of summer with juicy blueberries and shredded zucchini. Prep Time 20 minutes, Cook Time 50 minutes

### Ingredients

- 3 large eggs
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 Tbsp vanilla extract
- 2 1/4 cups sugar
- 2 cups \*zucchini, shredded
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 1 pint blueberries (2 cups)

### Lemon Buttercream Icing

- 1 cup butter (2 sticks, 8 ounces) at room temperature
- 4 cups confectioners' sugar
- Juice of 1 lemon

\*can substitute yellow squash

By Wilma Willard  
Garden Thyme July 2020

### Instructions

1. Set oven to 350F.
2. Lightly grease and flour a 9x13 baking pan.
3. Beat the eggs, oil, vanilla and sugar until well blended.
4. Fold in the zucchini.
5. Whisk the flour, salt, baking powder, and baking soda to combine.
6. Slowly add it to the wet mixture, mixing just enough to blend.
7. Fold in the blueberries.
8. Pour the batter into the prepared pan.
9. Bake for about 50 minutes, just until the top is turning golden and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out without wet batter clinging to it. Cool on a rack.
10. To make the icing, put the softened butter into the large bowl and beat until creamy. Add the sifted powdered sugar, one cup at a time, beating till smooth after each addition. After the second cup of sugar add in the lemon juice. Scrape down the sides of the bowl as necessary. Adjust the texture by adding a little more lemon or a little more sugar.
11. Frost the cooled cake. Store in the refrigerator -- if there is any left!



Rookie bakers may want to see this non-messy way to grease a pan using a sandwich bag.



Here are ingredients ready to measure and mix.



Use up garden squash with this upgrade of a tasty summer treat packed with lemon blueberry flavor!



# Garden Thyme

July 2020

Volume 6, Issue 4

# Nature Watch

## Survivor: Monarch Butterflies

By Linda Mapes  
PCMG Class of 2007

Most of us are aware of the basics of monarch butterflies as pollinators, as endangered insects because of loss of habitat, and as beautiful creatures. But, many don't know the risks that these creatures endure to even reach adulthood.

First, monarch females must have milkweed to lay their eggs a plant that has been seriously destroyed because of "being a weed." Once hatched, caterpillars are at risk before reaching adulthood by ants and especially paper wasps and other predators. How can we protect them?

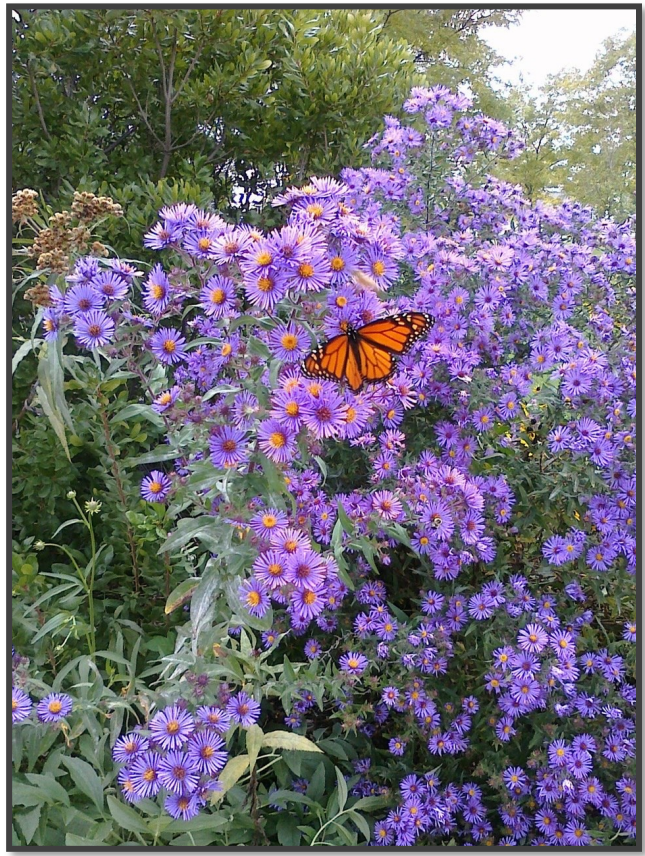
If we choose to plant milkweed, planting in the shade or as a single plant seems to deter predators.

Ants are a nuisance. An easy control is to mix equal parts (1 tablespoon) of powdered sugar and baking soda and place in a jar lid near the milkweed. Some think that sprinkling coffee grounds in the dirt around milkweed is also a deterrent.

Wasps, especially paper wasps, are the worst predator. One protection is to use a five-gallon paint strainer or mosquito netting around a domestic milkweed. Another solution is to collect the caterpillars and place them in a purchased habitat kept inside or on a porch. However, this involves a willingness to be the "caregiver" by collecting fresh milkweed leaves and cleaning the habitat daily.

The worst solution is spraying insecticide. A friend accidentally sprayed caterpillars. We captured and isolated the caterpillars, watching them grow to chrysalis stage. Sadly, the photos display what emerged.

Now you know some tips to aid survival of monarchs. How can you help?



Two pesticide damaged butterflies

# Garden Thyme

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Volume 6, Issue 4

## GARDEN GAMES

By Wilma Willard  
PCMGA Class of 2011

**What is Disc Golf?** It is a flying disc (Frisbee) sport in which players throw a disc at a target. It is played using rules similar to golf. Lowest number of throws to hit the targets win!

**Where do you play Disc Golf?** It is usually played on a \*disc golf course with 9 or 18 holes. However, it can be played in any park or your own front or backyard!

**How do you play Disc Golf in your yard?** You can play by yourself, but of course, any game is more fun with some family or friends to challenge you. Everyone gets a flying disc (Frisbee). Agree how many "holes" you will play to complete your game. Take turns declaring where you will tee off and what the target is for each "hole". For instance, Player 1 declares "for the first hole, we will tee off here on the edge of the driveway and our target is the oak tree." The players complete that hole and keep score. The number of throws it takes you to hit the target is your



*A fun game for all ages and an opportunity to enjoy that beautiful yard you work so hard in!*

score for that hole. Then Player 2 declares, "for the second hole, we will tee off here by the oak tree and our target is the north side of the garage." Continue to play, taking turns declaring the holes until you have completed the afore agreed upon length of the game. The person with the lowest score for all the holes combined wins the Disc Golf game. HAVE FUN!

### **\*Local Indiana Disc Golf Courses**

*Rogers-Lakewood Park in Valparaiso*

*Hawthorne Park Disc Golf Course in Porter*

*Glenn C. Nicholson Memorial Disc Golf Course in Portage*

*Hidden Lake Disc Golf Course in Merrillville*

## **Garden Thyme**

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## **EARN EDUCATION CREDIT!**

### **Education Opportunities around Indiana**

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/education-hours-opportunities/>

**Monthly PCMGA meetings** typically held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, often include an educational topic after the business meeting. These can be logged as educational hours, as well as, educational videos of former Garden Show seminars found at [pcgarden.info](http://pcgarden.info) on the Member Pages.

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