



# MAMGA Newsletter

August 2021



Backyard Peach Tree

Photo by Lisa Seidman

In this issue:

President's Message p. 2

Calendar Events p. 2

Fair Meadows Tour pp. 3 - 4

From Lisa Johnson p. 4

Report on Cultivate 21, hort trade show pp. 5 - 7

President's Message  
Ed Meachen

This is the post pandemic (even if we're not done with it) summer of garden tours! The Olbrich home garden tour featured eight great gardens this year. It turns out that this year's tour was more successful than many previous years with somewhere around 1500 visitors. People were clearly enjoying the freedom to get out and enjoy the gardens and the lovely weather. Few wore masks. I was delighted to see many MAMGA members staffing visitor's tents. It was great to see Jeff Epping's gravel garden and his espaliered apple and pear trees.

The Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society opened a lot of home gardens for tours. I was unable to get to any of these, but WHPS must have had nearly a dozen open gardens for public viewing. From what I read, these were as outstanding as the Olbrich home gardens.

Then there was a delightful tour of three gardens in Oregon hosted by a new group, the Oregon Nature Alliance. These suburban gardeners dedicated their back yards to native plants and untreated lawns sprinkled with clover. They are trying hard to create better environments for pollinators, insects and birds, small oases for native insects and birds. They are trying to convince suburban neighbors to join them in creating healthy yards.

This is the year of the garden. My hypothesis is that many people worked harder and longer on their gardens last year as they quarantined during the pandemic. And now they are showing off the fruits of their accomplishments—one of the good things that spun from the plague.

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Note: The July meeting of the MAMGA Board was cancelled due to a lack of agenda items.

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## Calendar Events

**August 3 Tuesday 12:30 pm – 2pm Green Thumb Tuesday goes live!** Monona Garden Restaurant, 6501 Bridge Road, Monona. Bring a mask just in case...

**August 9 Monday 11 to 12 noon Tour of Allen Centennial Garden**  
Register at [Eventbrite](#). There is a parking lot across Babcock Drive. See [the website](#).

**August 10 Tuesday 10am to noon Tour of Schumacher Farm Park** [Registration](#) is limited to 30 people and closes at noon on August 9. Schumacher Farm is at 5682 Wisconsin 19 near Waunakee. See [the website](#) for more info.

**August 14 Saturday 10 to 11:30 am**  
**Wildflowers in the Conservancy: A Prairie and Savanna Walking Tour**

Join the Madison Chapter of the Wild Ones on this one-hour guided tour of the restored prairies of Pope Farm Conservancy. August is a great time to experience a prairie ecosystem and see many flowers in full bloom. This pleasant walk will serve as an introduction to prairie ecology and plant identification. Those who attend can also ask restoration experts for hints and tips for starting their own "pocket prairies." Bring your cameras and wear comfortable



walking shoes for hiking. This tour is free and open to the public – no registration is necessary. We will meet in the lower parking lot. Event website:

<https://www.popefarmconservancy.org/events/prairie-savannah-walking-tour/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/events/202140615073032/>

## Fair Meadows DNR State Natural Area

by Dennis Tande

And you thought your backyard gardening took time and effort. How about 380 acres? Fair Meadows is a DNR State Natural Area in Rock County owned by Gary and Penny Shakelford. Since the area is privately owned and open to the public only during field days and educational tours, I took the opportunity to visit with the Natural Resources Foundation in July.



In addition to easily identifying the native plants, Gary and Penny gave the history of the project, maintenance schedule (removal of invasives and woody species, prescribed burns and interseeding), record keeping, land acquisition reclamation of farm land and orchards, neighbor cooperation and future land protection.

We saw several natural communities, including oak woodland/savanna, wet prairie, sedge meadow, shrub-carr, open marsh and spring complex.

The oak woodland/savanna had white oak and shagbark hickory, black cherry and hackberry. In the large wetland basin, plants to be seen throughout the season included marsh marigold, skunk-cabbage, great angelica, stiff cowbane and fen willow-herb. Other possibilities in the sedge meadow were tussock sedge and blue-joint grass, spotted Joe-Pye-weed, boneset, shiny-leaved aster, Riddell's goldenrod and sedges. Other wetland sites included shrub-carr with red-osier dogwood and willow. Soft-stem bulrush, sweet-flag and southern blue flag iris were also abundant.



For the birders, we saw Great Blue Heron, Purple Martins and a Sedge Wren. More than 192 species of birds have been documented at the site

But the highlight of the visit was the *Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid*. It is 1 of at least 200 North American orchid species and



is federally threatened. While this year, there were far fewer plants, there have been 200+ in other years. Gary and Penny keep detailed notes on number and location.

From Lisa Johnson:

**Here are two paid opportunities:**

Tom Ellefson would like assistance in Middleton designing garden beds for an apartment building. He is looking for design, layout help. They would buy the plants you recommend, you show them how/where to lay out and maybe help with planting. These would need to be hardy perennials for full sun. Tom's email is [thomas@ellefsonconstruction.com](mailto:thomas@ellefsonconstruction.com) . I have his phone if you want it.

A woman who has mobility challenges needs a gardener to do lots of weeding in her yard on River Road in Madison's north side, may be a Waunakee address. After the yard clean up is done it would also involve moving some hostas and ferns around. If they could start in the next couple of weeks that would be great. The pay rate is \$30/hour. Call Faye Langum, 608-228-5833

**From Lisa Johnson (continued) Onboarding Lite:**

I wanted to send a couple items from the Volunteer Vibe to you in case you missed them. If you have not yet done onboarding lite, here is another reminder to get a Net-ID so you can access the training in Canvas. If you need help in accessing the Canvas training (onboarding lite) after DoIT sends you a net-ID, please let me know and I will help you.

**Reminder:**

Wisconsin Horticulture Update, Fridays at  
9:30a.m.

Tune into the Wisconsin Horticulture Update on most Fridays during the growing season. **Sign up for weekly reminders** and have the connection information emailed right to you each week

(recommended): <https://app.e2ma.net/app2/audience/signup/1945894/1785948/>

You can also find the link to connect each Friday in our [Canvas Classroom](#).

**Each WHU = 1 hour of continuing education**



[From Percy Mather Newsletter Editor: My apologies for the formatting glitches below. ]

## Cultivate 21 - Columbus Ohio, July 10-13

by Dennis Tande

**Cultivate 21** is the largest all-industry horticultural trade show in North America, sponsored by AmericanHort.

I am a seasonal employee at Kopke's Greenhouse in Oregon, WI and was invited along with 9 other colleagues to attend. The expo is three and one half days and filled with exhibits, education sessions, tours and workshops. The program was 175 pages long - listing 162 speakers, 500 companies and 35 sessions. The sessions included:

- business
- garden retail
- greenhouse
- human resources
- trends
- research technology
- interior plant scapes
- landscapes
- nursery
- growing
- business diagnostics
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- I attended a variety of sessions and wandered the exhibition hall, a few times because it was



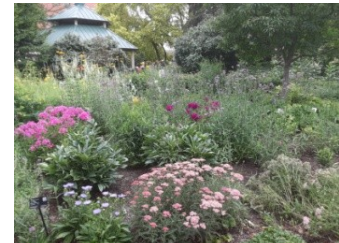
impossible to see everything the first time. The booths were filled with a variety of products ranging from fertilizers and plants to a \$81,000 pot labeling machine.

Kopke's did not purchase one.

There were also displays of new varieties premiering in 2022.



I was also able to tour the Ohio State University Cultivar Trial Gardens with over 700 annuals and perennials. Here are some that caught my eye from the trial gardens and the exhibit hall (plus one of my new favorites).



Helianthus - Petunia - Super Cal Daisy - Amazing Spun Silk

Suncredible Saturn Premium Orange Sun

Thunbergia - Coconut A-Peel

Pepper - Candy Cane Chocolate Cherry

Artemisian - Gmelinii Sunfern Arcadia

Grass - Lemon Squeeze

Zinnia - Persian Carpet (not new, but I grew it last year)







I also checked out: **Strawberry** - Snowy Belle, Rosy Belle, Scarlet Belle, **Brassica** - Crystal, Coral and Peacock Series from Takii Seeds. **Cucumber** - Patio Snacker from Takii Seeds

### **Trends and Updates**

- ❖ **Edible gardening** 56 million food gardeners, growing in ground / container / table top. The table top gardening seemed least appealing, with the small plants being used more as gifts.
- ❖ **Baskets and Containers** Customers are "eco-chic" wanting to have their plants also benefit the environment and suitable for patio spaces. Pollinator plants are big.
- ❖ **FOMO** (fear of missing out) is now **FOGO** (fear of going out). People are still a bit reluctant, so the front yard is important. It says welcome to our home, but still not in my personal space. Create outdoor zones for kids, entertainment, office, isolation.
- ❖ **Indoor decorating** is big with a 70s revival - macrame, ferns, Feng Shui, nostalgia.
- ❖ New gardeners are buying beginning tools and seeds and containers. Believe in organic and natural. Smart accessories like raised beds and self watering pots. This is a DIY generation. They want to understand how to do it at home. Can always just look things up on YouTube, but what can the greenhouse staff do to teach.
- ❖ **Living TV**. Outdoor entertainment like bird/wildlife watching is big. 67.2 million households purchased a plant for pollinators/birds.
- ❖ **Clover Green** is the 2022 color of the year.

If you have any questions, you may use [info@mamgawi.org](mailto:info@mamgawi.org).

### **Signature Project Update**

by Percy Mather

At the Lussier Family Heritage Center grounds, volunteers created a second pollinator garden, a sensory garden near the play area near the barn, and planted two large plots with native species. We acquired several hoses in order to keep the new seedlings alive during our dry spells. Normally our workdays are from 9 to noon on the first & third Fridays of the month. In June and July, we added a Tuesday night work session from 5 to 7pm to get the plants in the ground faster. For the most part, we enjoyed a pleasant breeze that kept the mosquitoes away. In August as a peak vacation time and the higher temperatures, we're focusing on watering and weeding independently. In September we'll go back to the second and third Fridays. (Labor day weekend is the first weekend in September.)

We are battling Queen Anne's lace, thistle, birds foot trefoil, and parsnip in the areas where the project started. We had a wonderful display of pink monarda blossoms. The brilliantly red cardinal flower has begun to appear. If you are interested in helping, feel free to contact me at 608 233-1955 or [percy.mather@gmail.com](mailto:percy.mather@gmail.com) for information about access to tools, hoses and water.