

# MAMGA Newsletter

## July 2023



Greenhouse Interior

In this issue:

President's Column p. 2

Calendar of Events pp. 2-3

Garden Tour Sites July 18 pp. 3-4

Registration Information to Follow. Save these dates for August events:

August 9, 11 AM Tour of Seed Savers Exchange, Decorah, Iowa \$6.

August 26, 9:30 AM Tour of the Prairie Restoration at the Int'l Crane Foundation in Baraboo.  
\$11.50

**President's Column** I know many of you probably keep track of insects, plants and birds with the Aldo Leopold Foundation's calendar. I'm a late comer to the phenology calendar, but I acquired one of the calendars after Stanley Temple's talk at the annual meeting, and I will definitely continue to get them. At our place, we've had difficulties finding monarchs. We have plenty of milkweed. The calendar tells me it begins to bloom in early May, and many of ours did bloom. But over the years I've observed that Monarchs like to lay their eggs in younger milkweeds, not blooming yet. I purposefully avoid pulling young milkweed so Monarchs will have plenty of opportunity to have lunch on the leaves in their caterpillar stage.

Now that July is upon us, I'm looking at that month's phenology. I have nodding wild onions and a great stand of Joe Pye weed. I presume the calendar is updated each year, noting that both begin to bloom on or around July 9<sup>th</sup>. I'm going to watch these, and other plant blooms very carefully to see if the warmer temperatures have significantly moved bloom earlier this year. We can see the buds on the Joe Pye weed already developing. I'm pretty sure the long drought coupled with above average temperatures we've had here has affected perennial flowering. At our place near Oregon I've measure  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch of rain since May 17<sup>th</sup>.

When we left town for our trip to Greece, my biggest worry was that we would have a frost that would kill the tomatoes and peppers I planted. I did not think about drought. A neighbor saved the tomatoes and peppers by watering twice when we were gone. I owe her big time. This has been a tough spring and summer so far. Hopefully things will turn around in July. I'm betting you've all preserved your plants and your summer gardens look spectacular!

## MAMGA's Signature Project Lussier Prairie Update

MAMGA members and volunteers with Dane County Parks completed planting on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Now we will concentrate on watering the tiny plants and removing invasives such as parsnip, thistle, Queen Anne's lace, viburnum, honeysuckle, and bird's foot trefoil. Work sessions are on Friday morning from 9:30am to noon on July 7, 14, 21, and 28. **Lussier Family Heritage** is at 3101 Lake Farm Road. Tools, rest rooms, and water provided. Common milkweed is just starting to bloom. Monarda will be opening soon. In case of stormy weather, workdays will be canceled. For more information, phone or text to 608 520-4364 or email [percy.mather@gmail.com](mailto:percy.mather@gmail.com)

## Interested in Learning about Climate Change?

Professor Sara Via (University of Maryland College Park) has webinars, a newsletter and a blog at [this website](#).

## Calendar of Events

July 11 12:30 – 1:30pm Green Thumb Tuesday Breakwater Restaurant, 6308 Inland Way, Monona, just off Bridge Road where it crosses the Yahara River. We have a separate room for our group. We'd like to give the restaurant an idea of how many people are coming so send and email to Ed or Percy if you plan to attend or just turn up. Note that this is a one-time change to the second Tuesday of the month.

July 15 11 AM - 1 PM. UW Extension Teaching Garden Tour and Luncheon. Free for MAMGA members. Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/teaching-garden-tour-and-luncheon-tickets-600781061327> Stroll through the teaching garden and enjoy a delicious lunch with your gardening friends-time well spent!

July 18 Monday 4 -8pm Madison/Middleton Garden tours. See commentary below.

July 27 6PM - 7:30 PM Epic Systems garden tour led by Jeff Epping. Free for MAMGA members and their guests. Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/tour-of-gardens-at-epic-systems-tickets-669124067097?aff=oddtcreator>

Registration Information to Follow. Save these dates for August events:

August 9, 11 AM Tour of Seed Savers Exchange, Decorah, Iowa \$6.

August 26, 9:30 AM Tour of the Prairie Restoration at the Int'l Crane Foundation in Baraboo. \$11.50

## 2023 Garden Tours Sponsored by WI Hardy Plants & MAMGA

July 18 Tuesday– 4:00-8:00 PM Madison/Middleton

Rick Petran – 6109 Quetico Drive, Madison

My groundskeeping of this property began in 2002. The Wright styled limestone house was built in 1981, with garage and garden house added later. The lot is about  $\frac{2}{3}$  acre, a deep lot that narrows and rises as it moves away from the street. The garden is very private, being mostly hidden behind the house, making for a quiet peaceful space. Several limestone retaining walls add contrast, with several outdoor seating areas from which to enjoy the view. After moving to this property (my first house, after several condos), I found myself overwhelmed by the scale of the yard.

I turned to Steve Lesch for advice, which has continued as I've taken on garden projects over the years. The focus has been low maintenance perennials- including a variety of yew, holly, peony, hydrangea, hosta, and hellebore. Trees include: Amur cherry, Korean arborvitae, Japanese stewartia, pagoda dogwood, Japanese maple, hemlock, paperbark maple, ginkgo, weeping beech. At the far upper end of the garden is a fenced off orchard area, including raspberries, and peach, apple, cherry and apricot trees. Behind the garden house are a variety of pear trees espaliered along the fence (which refuse to blossom- not enough sun?).

Barbara Borders – 6 Rough Lee Ct, Madison

When I moved to Madison in 2016, my yard and garden was pretty much a blank slate. Two areas in front of the house were covered with ground junipers. Between the ground junipers an area contained four rose bushes surrounded by cobblestone. When the house was built in the mid-80's a rock wall was built at the

west end of the house. I've created one large sunny bed by removing the ground junipers and rose bushes. I've also created a bed extending the length of the rock wall. That area just barely grew grass since it was shady and primarily clay. I continue to add lots of soil amendments to all beds since the soil is predominately clay. In the sunny area I have added some benches to display my Bonsai trees. On the north side of the house I removed grass to make a bed for tomatoes, zucchini and okra. I've created some beds because I continue to add new plants every year and I've expanded other beds because mowing is not high on my list of fun things to do. Someday, I might even be able to retire my lawnmower!

Sue Niesen – 6613 Old Sauk Rd, Madison

Gardening began in the 70's with the love of colors in a small garden. The garden grew each year once I convinced my husband I could take care of what I already have. We have added curbing so I am not tempted to make them larger. There is about 80% perennials and 20% annuals. I start planting seeds I have collected from my gardens in February under grow lights, hoping for germination of more than 40 flats. Some seeds stay true and some are a real pleasant surprise. I choose not to use mulch and enjoy weeding. Maybe some of my Brugmansia will be in color during the tour. You will be able to walk through on homemade pavers my husband and I made in our garage and rolled to their permanent spot. Each one weighs 80 pounds and was a challenge to only move ONCE. What is there to say about a garden? The visual view expresses my love of color and texture – mother nature does it all, I am just the caretaker. Welcome to all.

Linda and Phil Grosz – 4258 Blackstone Ct, Middleton

When we built our home 25 years ago, our goal was to transform our large, vacant lot into a beautiful, tranquil, and wildlife-friendly environment. Our first project was planting nearly an acre of native prairie with species tolerant of heavy clay. Featured in the August 2022 issue of Garden Gate Magazine, the prairie now surrounds our yard with an abundant and colorful mix of wildflowers and grasses that sustain many pollinators.

A stream cascading into a large pond was the next landscape feature we installed, and it has become the focal point of the back yard and a magnet for visiting birds. Over the years, we've added thousands of spring bulbs and perennials, large shade and hosta gardens, as well as a rock garden, herb and vegetable gardens, and a whimsical miniature garden. We've also assembled a diverse collection of conifers, Japanese maples, and garden art. Join us for a glass of wine on the back deck, and enjoy the view of our pond, prairie, and the adjacent Pleasant View Golf Course.