Home Horticulture - Ricky's Gardening Tips and Tricks - September 2020

Written and compiled by Ricky D. Kemery, Allen County Extension Educator Retired, phone or text: 260-431-6893

Ricky's Gardening Tips and Tricks / Home Horticulture is an online newsletter designed to provide citizens of Allen County and northeastern Indiana with up-to-date information about Horticulture and home issues, written in a lighthearted style! To subscribe, send an email to kemeryr7@frontier.com.

Cold Hardy Figs *compiled from The Ohio State and Cornel University*

Figs are thought to have originated in Asia – spreading west to the Mediterranean. Ficus trees grown as houseplants in the U.S., and the mulberry tree in your backyard are edible fig relatives.
Figs are a unique fruit resembling a teardrop. They're about the size of your thumb, filled with hundreds of tiny seeds, and have an edible purple or green peel. The flesh of the fruit is pink and has a mild, sweet taste. The scientific name for the fig is *Ficus carica.*

Figs — and their leaves — are packed with nutrients and offer a variety of potential health benefits. They may promote healthy digestion, decrease your risk of heart disease, and help you manage your blood sugar levels.

Many gardeners in our region would love to grow their own fig trees. However, most fig trees will not survive the intense cold snaps we can experience in this region. However, there are two fig tree cultivars that can be grown in the Midwest with a little extra care and management.

Figs can be one of three types: Common, San Pedro, or Smyrna (Ernst, 2018). Fig cultivars of the common type, such as Brown Turkey and Hardy Chicago, do not require pollination to produce fruits. They produce fruits through parthenocarpy, which is a process where plants set fruits from unfertilized ovules. They do not contain seeds, but rather partially developed ovules. Fig cultivars of the San Pedro and Smyrna types are not recommended for Ohio, as the wasp needed for pollination does not survive the cold winters in Ohio.

Brown Turkey

According to The Ohio State University, Brown Turkey has shown promise in growing and producing well in the trials at OSU research trial plots. Although Brown Turkey can produce two distinct crops in a long, warm growing season; that is unlikely to occur in Ohio. When grown under a high tunnel, fruits of this cultivar are likely to ripen beginning in mid- to late-September and continue until a killing freeze occurs. When grown outside without protection, Brown Turkey may prove to be a challenge because fruits may not fully ripen until early October. Its fresh fruits are very large and flavorful.

Figure 3. Ripening Brown Turkey fig fruit. Photo by Gary Gao, The Ohio State University.

Potential hardy fig growers in our region should exercise caution when purchasing Brown Turkey figs plants from a nursery. Some Californian Brown Turkeys may not be the same hardy Brown Turkey figs. This confusion was first mentioned in a North Carolina State publication in

1986 and may still exist. Growers should trial a small number of plants to make sure they get the true hardy version of Brown Turkey before purchasing a larger number of plants.

Hardy Chicago

This cultivar is likely more suitable for Midwestern growing conditions, although its fruits are much smaller than those of Brown Turkey. Under average outside growing conditions, they ripen approximately three weeks before Brown Turkey. In Southern Ohio, you can expect to harvest fruits from this cultivar beginning in early- to mid-September until a killing freeze occurs. Like Brown Turkey, a high tunnel can help ripen the fruit sooner for an earlier harvest and protect the developing fruits for higher yields and a later harvest. The flavor of Hardy Chicago is exceptional and has a resemblance to a peach.

Fig plants develop extensive, relatively shallow fibrous root systems and should not be planted near drainpipes, sewer lines or other underground infrastructure potentially affected by invasive roots. They prefer soils that are slightly acidic (pH of 6.0 to 6.5), loamy, well drained, and high in organic matter. In other words, figs will probably grow poorly in heavy clay subsoil. Some experts recommend growing hardy figs in raised beds for better drainage and control of weeds. Figs need full sun (a good six hours or more). Plant the tree against a protected south wall if possible. In our area, figs will need winter protection. Around Thanksgiving, one can use a hardware cloth to construct a cage around the fig and use mulch, dry leaves, or soil to protect it from the cold. Container-grown figs can be moved into a protected area like the garage.

You should encourage a bush form rather than a tree form for ease in maintenance and winter protection. Begin training to bush form at planting; cut back young plants to about half their height. Starting the second year after planting, you can prune each spring after danger of frost is past but before growth has started. Fruits are produced on the current season's growth, so keep this in mind when pruning new growth.

For optimum flavor and sugar content, figs are harvested when the fruit stem becomes less rigid and the fruit droops down slightly. Fresh mature figs are tender, bruise easily and have a short storage life. Fruit should be handled carefully and kept dry. The optimum storage temperature for figs is 30-32°F and at 90-95% relative humidity. Fruit softening and decay are accentuated at temperatures above 41°F.

According to Ohio State, one can expect 2 to 5 pounds per plant during the first three years when figs are grown in high tunnels. Homeowners can expect 1 pound of fruit per plant. Unfortunately, a large percentage of fig fruits will fail to ripen once cold temperatures arrive in our area.

http://ccenassau.org/resources/-fig-culture

Tubakia Blight on Oaks – Compiled from Iowa State University

Tubakia blight is a fungal disease affecting oak trees. Black, red, and pin oak trees are most severely affected, Maple, apple, and elm, can be also affected by the fungus. Members of the white oak group can also be infected with Tubakia.

This disease is unusual because symptoms show up in mid to late summer – extending into fall, compared with other fungal disease of trees that appear in the spring.

Symptoms of Tubakia:

Leaf Spots and blotches: Circular leaf spots ranging from ¼ - ½ inch in diameter and red brown to black in color. Spots may grow into one another and form larger, irregularly shaped blotches. Spots may have dark rings or a yellow 'halo' around them.
Defoliation: Defoliation may become severe on stressed trees, but this occurs late in the season when trees would begin to drop leaves anyway. The disease can cause small cankers on small branches or twigs

The fungus overwinters in fallen leaves and sticks. If this debris is not removed, fungal spores will be spread in the spring by wind and rain splash. Trees are infected early in the season but will not show symptoms until mid- to late summer or early fall.

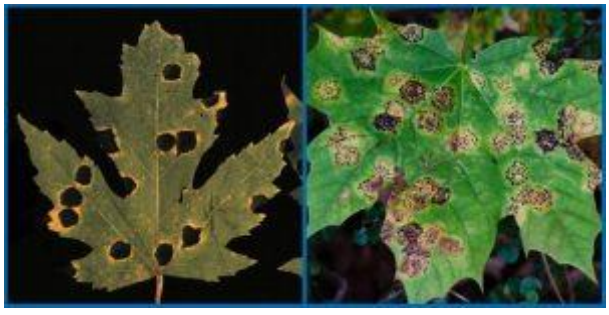
Tubakia leaf spot is a cosmetic disease and does not affect the overall health of the tree since it occurs so late in the season. Trees experiencing stress such as drought or nutrient deficiency are more susceptible to the disease. Iron deficiency makes trees particularly susceptible. Newly transplanted trees are more prone to infection than older, more established trees. The fungus needs warm, wet conditions to thrive.

Rake and destroy infected plant material in the fall or winter before the fungus begins spreading spores in the spring. Leaves and sticks can be buried, burned where allowed, or composted.

Fungicide applications are not recommended since this disease occurs late in the season and does not threaten the overall health of the tree.

Tar Spot

Tar spot is another fungal disease that actually infects the leaves early in the spring but doesn't show up on the leaves until mid-to-late summer. It affects maples, primarily silver maple. Basically, the same measures one would use for Tubakia apply to Tar Spot. No treatment is necessary for larger trees. Copper based fungicides can be used on small trees with a history of issues with Tar Spot in early spring.



Honestly, there are more pressing issues in the world than Tar Spot or Tubakia. However, every year folks see these fungal diseases and become concerned the trees will die. Many want to treat the tree or hire a tree service to treat the tree. Don't waste your time and money… take up knitting or embroidery, bake cakes and cookies and post pictures of your meals made with fresh vegetables on social media. Sunsets and cat videos, kangaroo boxing, and goats or cows dancing are also appreciated.

Revenge of The Eagles!

A bald eagle in Michigan's Upper Peninsula "launched an airborne attack" on a drone operated by the state's Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE).

During the squabble, the eagle tore off the drone's propeller, making the device plummet 162 feet through the air and into the lake. The "brazen" eagle versus EGLE clash took place while environmental quality analyst and drone pilot Hunter King was mapping erosion along the shoreline. The data is being used to help communities cope with rising water levels.

When King faced poor satellite reception, he pressed the "Go Home" button, recalling the drone back to him. But as it made its way home, it began "twirling furiously" during its tussle with the eagle. "It was like a really bad rollercoaster ride," said King.

When he looked up to find the drone in the sky, it was gone, and the eagle was already flying away, victorious. A nearby couple confirmed to King that they saw an eagle attack something in the sky. The three said the eagle appeared uninjured as it made its escape from the crime scene.
King and the couple searched for the drone for hours but returned empty handed. Several days later, EGLE Unmanned Aircraft Systems coordinator Arthur Ostaszewski brought a kayak to the search.
About 150 feet offshore, in four feet of water, Ostaszewski searched for two hours in a grid pattern, but also found nothing. It was like "I was playing Battleship and wanted to cover the entire board," he said of his search.

The agency said the drone was a DJI Phantom 4 Pro Advanced, which cost $950.
Data from the flight indicates the drone sent 27 warning notifications a few seconds after the fight began, including one regarding the propeller that had been torn off. Its final message to the world indicated it was falling at 30 feet per second before it hit the water. "The attack could have been a territorial squabble with the electronic foe, or just a hungry eagle," EGLE said.

The agency's drone team is looking into ways to reduce repeat attacks in the future, including altering the design of the drone so they look less like seagulls. ," A spokesman for the EGLE said. "Nature is a cruel and unforgiving mistress."

Thoughts:

Did the drone send a message to the operator which said" Help! I'm falling and I can't get up!

Scratching my head over how a $950.00 drone somehow looks like a seagull.

Score: Eagle 1 Drone 0

The eagle is reported to have said before attacking; "Hello, my name is Inigo Montoya. You killed my father. Prepare to die."

Scale Insects by Penny Alles, Purdue Advanced Master Gardener, Plant Diagnostic Specialist

Scale can become quite a bad problem if one does not know what to look for. A lot of e-mails have come in this season with the poor appearance of both Magnolia trees and shrubs. They showed signs of stunted growth, branch dieback, yellow blotches, and sometimes full leaf drop.

After looking at photos sent in or the occasional site visit, I found that they were being attacked by the insect Magnolia Scale, *Neolecanium cornuparvum*.

In fact, different types of scale are found on several samples of lilac, and Euonymus. This insect is misidentified many times because it is not your average pest. For the majority of its life, it stays in one spot. They look like part of the bark or leaf or even a bud at first glance. Mature scale can look like a small (1/2 inch or smaller) round fish scale or some elongated or cottony bump. When they first hatch out, they have legs and antennae and move around (crawler stage). Scale crawlers are tiny 1/6 inch long or smaller. When they molt to the next instar almost all females lose their legs and do not move again. The males have 2 more instars that their wings appear, looking like a gnat in size. The male scale is almost never seen. Scale insert their straw like mouthpart (6-8 times longer than the insect itself) into the plant tissue sucking out the nourishment it needs to live.

Oystershell Scale

There are 2 types of scale, soft and armored. It is important to know the difference between the 2 because control measures are different for both (timing or product). Scale are a large group in the superfamily *Coccoidea* of the order: Hemiptera.

Sooty Mold (Magnolia)

Soft scale feed on phloem sap and excrete a sweet, sticky liquid known as "honeydew". A black colored fungus can grow on the honeydew, called sooty mold. This fungus can get worse the more humid the area. You can use the presence of this black mold on the leaf surface as a diagnostic sign you have this particular pest. The sweet honeydew also attracts ants, bees, flies and wasps in places they would not normally be on a healthy plant or tree.

In some heavy infestations the ant has been known to take care of the scale… fighting off predators that would naturally take control of your problem. Soft scale has coverings that won't detach from its body. Scale insects with a hardened wax covering that detach from their soft bodies are referred to as "armored". They do not wear the full metal body armor a knight would wear but their bodies have little pores that excrete a waxy substance. This will pop off the existing hard covering, making room for the next larger size of the scale. With armored scale the female is round, and the male is elongated making it easier to see the difference, before the male gets its wings and flies away to reproduce.

The crawlers generally emerge in Spring or early Summer of each generation. It is essential to know each species so you know when this stage will happen because it is the best time for maximum control of the problem. You can use some 2-sided sticky tape just above your existing scale to try and catch new emerging crawlers moving toward the light. This will tell you it is time to apply your contact spray. When you are looking at the scale try to see if there are tiny holes on the outer side of the scale. This could tell you that nature is working, and your scale has attracted predatory wasps. These wasps will lay their eggs inside the scale that will eat the scale from the inside then exiting after fully grown to attack more scale nearby.

Soft Scale, Magnolia Parasitic Wasp exit hole

You don’t want to kill your natural predators with the insecticide you are using for your scale. Try to use IPM (integrated pest management) when your applying product by using the least toxic first. This will also help with the size of your footprint on the Earth. Cultural control; always plant in the correct site for your plant or tree (right plant right spot). Insects ALWAYS attack stressed plants first. Biological; lady beetles and parasitic wasps.

Chemical application needs to be during crawler stages because product cannot penetrate tough skin or waxy cover. Use horticultural oil by smothering the scale. Insect growth regulators can be promising. Soil systemic insecticides can also be applied. Always follow the directions on the container you choose to use. Good luck and happy gardening.

Queen Anne’s Lace

Queen Anne's Lace *Daucus carota* (also called "Wild Carrot), is native to the temperate regions of Europe and southwest Asia and has been widely naturalized to most of continental North America and to Australia. In Iowa, Washington, Michigan, and Ohio, it is sufficiently invasive to be listed as a noxious weed by the USDA.

This plant has fern-like foliage and is best known for its flowers, which are tiny and white, blooming in lacy, flat-topped clusters - some with a dark, purplish floret center. There is good genetic evidence that wild carrot is the direct progenitor of the cultivated carrot. The French and English were responsible for selecting wild types more suitable for domestic consumption.
.
Ancient cultures used wild carrot as an herb, and it is also quite likely that the seeds were used medicinally in the Mediterranean region since antiquity.

Queen Anne’s lace prefers well-drained, sandy and gravely soils and direct sunlight. It is biennial, meaning it establishes only vegetative growth in its first year. After experiencing winter cold, Queen Anne’s Lace produces flowers, goes to seed, and dies in its second year.

Mature plants are generally 30-40 inches tall, with ferny foliage. They flower throughout the summer-often from June till frost. When the flowers go to seed, the flat, white umbels turn brown, curving and contracting inward into a nest-like formation that is probably the source of the plant’s alternative name, ‘bird’s nest’. Often you will find a single darkly colored floret just off center, standing tall above the rest. No one knows why.

The caterpillars of the Black Swallowtail butterfly eat the leaves, and bees and other insects drink the nectar. Queen Anne’s Lace also attracts beneficial insects, such as the Green Lacewing, which come to Queen Anne's Lace to attack prey such as aphids.

There are several versions of how Queen Anne’s Lace came by its name. It may have been named after Anne Boleyn (1500-1536), Anne of Denmark (1574-1619), or Queen Anne the Good (1665-1714), as a tribute to her needlework prowess and skill at making lace. The flower’s single red umbel is fancifully said to represent a drop of blood from the Queen pricking her finger with her needle while tatting the lace.

A variation on this tale involves Anne of Denmark's arriving in England and being so charmed at first sight of the flower that she initiated a contest amongst her ladies, to see if any of them could produce lace to rival the beauty of the flower. Others have suggested that the flower resembles a royal headdress, collar, or ruff made of lace, or that the flower was named after Saint Anne, the patron saint of lace makers. English botanist Geoffrey Grigson suggests that the name of the plant comes not from a Queen of England but from Saint Anne, the mother of the Virgin Mary and the patron saint of lace makers.

Tomatoes are said to grow better when Queen Anne's lace is planted nearby; this may be due to the plant's attracting wasps away from the tomatoes. Queen Anne's lace may also benefit certain root crops by decoying a pest known as the carrot fly away from them. Anyone who has seen Queen Anne's lace up close in the field will know that it is a ladybug magnet, and ladybugs naturally control aphids and other pests. Queen Anne's lace makes a lovely cut flower but has a short vase-life of about five days. If placed in water to which food coloring has been added, the flowers of Queen Anne's lace will assume that color, making an interesting and simple science experiment for children.

Ricky's 2020 Ponderings from the Garden

I am not a talented artist who can draw or paint beautiful portraits. I always tell people I know that the garden is my palette, and plants are my paint. How interesting it is that each year I begin a new painting to enjoy each day. Gardens can be hard work but can bring joy to troubled hearts. This year I was more active in my backyard garden, even with bad knees.

Intense Gardening Interest: I received so many questions about gardening this season from readers of my Journal Gazette articles, this newsletter, or folks who contacted me with questions that no one else would or could answer. 2020 has brought another resurgence in home gardening similar to the Victory Garden movement of the 1940's and the organic and sustainable gardening movements in the 1990's and the 2008 economic disaster. This year, isolated seniors and younger folks were trying to supplement their healthy food choices – and trying to keep busy. Gardening can provide that - along with exercise for the body and spirit.

Drought: Earlier this season, I discussed how this year was similar to the hot and dry year of 2012. While not quite as severe – this season comes pretty close. I am now seeing stress on landscape trees and shrubs. If we don't receive any decent rainfall this fall, I would definitely deep water smaller or recently planted trees, shrubs, and perennials before the first hard freeze. Evergreens are especially susceptible to winter injury when they head into a winter under drought stress.

Birds: There are generally fewer birds nowadays compared to earlier decades. Experts from various agencies and organizations have estimated that North America has three billion fewer birds today compared to 1970—that's more than 1 in 4 birds that have disappeared from the landscape in a mere half a century. About 90 percent of the missing birds came from 12 distinct and widespread bird families, including warblers, sparrows, blackbirds, and finches. Common birds found in many different habitats—even introduced, ubiquitous species like European Starlings—experienced some of the steepest drops. Feeder birds like the Dark-eyed Junco declined by nearly 170 million individuals. White-throated Sparrows dropped by more than 90 million. Many bird enthusiasts have reported seeing fewer

hummingbirds this season. Experts speculate that pesticide use, insect declines, and climate change, as well as direct threats like outdoor feral cats and loss of habitat are some reasons for the decline.
This year birds arrived later because of the cooler weather this spring. This year, there were definitely fewer birds in the trees in and around my home on the northeast side of Fort Wayne – and around our area. I have noticed that birds are migrating earlier this year which could be a harbinger of an earlier and colder winter. Oh boy….

Attracting Pollinators / Eclectic Beneficials:

In recent years I have worried less about neatness and order. My gardens are kind of wild. I prefer to mass plant, so weeds are less of an issue. I allow some plants like **Queen Anne's lace and Smartweed** to develop in small numbers because I like them – and pollinators love them.

Black Swallowtail butterflies love to visit Queen Anne's' Lace, along with bees and other insects. Bees love smartweed flowers.

Most of my garden is filled with annuals that I seeded in early spring. The number of annual flowers actually native to the U.S is quite small. I do plant sunflowers and Californian poppies each year. The **sunflowers and Mexican sunflowers** are prized by birds and butterflies. The poppies have declined with the heat of the summer, but I know I will see more seedlings pop up next spring

Bees and other insects are abundant in my garden. They seem to love my **Celosia "New Look"** – which is a tall cockscomb with both plume and comb flowers on plants with purple foliage and deep red flowers. Bees adore the flowers of **garlic chives**, which I planted long ago and still persist in the garden. They can take over a garden bed with rich soil, so I let them flourish in areas with poorer soil to keep them in bounds.

I have become very fond of **Nasturtiums** – partly because of their bright colors, but also because they are so easy and fast from seed. I have plants that began to flower in May that are still flowering now. They are a good candidate (along with Zinnias) for reseeding in mid-to late summer to carry the flowering will into late fall.

My two cherry tomato plants – purchased at Amazon this spring for almost ten bucks apiece – have more than paid back on the original investment. They absolutely flourished in large containers interplanted with dill, zinnias, and signet marigolds.

Morning Glories, which I featured last month in Home Horticulture, have performed almost too well this season. Next year I will not be planting any new seed and will probably need to rouge out some plants. They are beautiful in the morning sun.

I encourage gardeners to grow what they like and not be so worried about neat and tidy rows, or whether every plant in their garden meets others' expectations. To me there are many gardeners too quick to judge and offer their "expert" advice on how things should be done. These gardeners ruin the experience for everyone else – the garden plebeians of the world – who just want to grow food and flowers for food and joy with sometimes very limited resources.

Asian Jumping Worms a Threat to Gardens and Woodlands

Compiled from an August 27, 2020 article from Mike Hogan
The Ohio State University

As gardeners, we understand that earthworms are important allies in creating a soil ecosystem that is conducive to growing flowers, vegetables, turf, shrubs, trees, or any type of plant. Deep dwelling earthworms such as common night crawlers create tunnels, which allow air and water to reach plant roots. Their castings, or excrement, help enrich the soil by adding nutrients such as phosphorous, calcium, nitrogen, and magnesium.

But recently an invasive species of earthworm, the Asian Jumping worm, also known as snake worms or crazy worms for their quick, crazed-like movement, have gardeners in Central Ohio anxiously turning their soil in search of this earthworm which is more destructive than helpful to those who tend the soil.

These invasive species of jumping worms from eastern Asia (there are several different species) arrived on the West Coast of the United States more than 100 years ago, and were documented in New York in the early 1900's. And just because 2020 hasn't been disruptive or unsettling enough, Asian Jumping worms started appearing in Central Ohio gardens this summer. Wherever they have been found they have degraded soil quality by voraciously devouring organic matter at the top of the soil, leaving large amounts of telltale castings, which look similar to used coffee grounds.

Because these worms live and feed at the top of the soil, they are not effective at deep aeration of the soil and actually create too much pore space, drying out the soil in the heat of the summer. Additionally, these worms create a loose seedbed making it difficult for plant roots to be established and leaving the soil more susceptible to erosion. The worms have also been observed to feed on roots of young plants.

The negative effects of these worms are magnified on the forest floor where they quickly devour layers of leaf litter needed to create humus to build top soil and provide a medium for native plants to germinate. Fewer native plants will result in reduced food supply for wildlife and insects and can lead to reduced biodiversity of Ohio forests.

Identifying Asian Jumping worms may be easier by examining their behavior than their color or size, as they writhe quickly and constantly in large masses. Their movement is more similar to that of a provoked snake than that of other slow-moving earthworms. While similar in size to other earthworms, the Asian Jumping worm is brown to grey in color with a distinctive smooth white band (clitellum) that encircles the body near the head.

Unlike beneficial earthworms, Asian Jumping worm adults do not survive the winter. Rather, their eggs overwinter in the soil in cocoons about the size of a pencil eraser with adults appearing in early summer.

Until effective research-based control strategies are developed to keep populations of this worm in check, gardeners should closely examine soil, compost, wood chips, and other soil amendments they move on or off their property. If you do find these worms on your property, never share plants or soil with other gardeners.

Ricky's Thought: What else can happen this year? There is nothing worse than a provoked snake – or a crazed earthworm. It is the stuff that Hollywood blockbusters are made.

Grapefruit and Nootkatone – Compiled from Science article written by Alex Fox

Nootkatone is a citrusy smelling oil found in cedar trees and grapefruits which has been found to repel and kill ticks, mosquitoes, and a wide variety of other pests. Nootkatone, is responsible for the distinctive odor and taste of grapefruit, and it's widely used in the fragrance and food industries. “The compound is also found in the soft drinks Fresca and Squirt.

Officials from the EPA announced recently that the agency has approved the substance and considers it non-toxic to people and animals.

The mechanics of how nootkatone works are “not known in great detail.” The compound appears to stimulate receptors involved in sending electrical impulses between the insect’s nerve cells. In large enough doses, the insects essentially “twitch to death. This explains the behavior of chronic Fresca drinkers.

.

Nootkatone may be just as effective as existing insect repellents but may be longer lasting. Researchers working for the CDC discovered nootkatone’s properties and developed it into a repellent and insecticide in collaboration with biotech company Evolva. An insect toxicologist at Iowa State University found nootkatone to be “an impressive repellent but a weak insecticide.” It's even better at discouraging ticks than DEET, picaridin or IR3535, and just as good at repelling mosquitoes. Products containing nootkatone as a mosquito repellant should begin appearing on the market in 2021 or 2022.

A Related Story - OMG No Fresca?

Evidently, finding Fresca and related Coca-Cola products has been an issue during the pandemic. Coca-Cola announced in July that “Given the current environment with COVID-19, we have experienced some delays in the distribution and stocking of Fresca products in certain locations and stores. That said, production of the product has not been stopped, and we’re doing everything we can to continue to stock Fresca to meet consumer demand as quickly as possible.”

During COVID-19, production has slowed slightly on a variety of products in various locations, including Fresca, to allow us to ensure we could focus production on meeting the high demand of water and other beverages during the pandemic. This was also coupled with increased demand of a variety of our products, including Fresca, given the pandemic. We have since returned to normal levels of Fresca production.

There also appears to be an aluminum can shortage due to people buying six-packs of beer because bars were closed. Demand for 12-ounce cans “shot through the roof.”

The world has gone mad. I wonder if Nootkatone is a region in Alaska.

Old Photos and Memories

I think it is important to value and remember volunteers who helped create the Display Gardens at the Allen County Extension office. I always told the volunteers who were a part of the volunteer team that we were all part of a very big family whose job it was to spread beauty and joy to citizens who visited the Gardens and Extension Office..

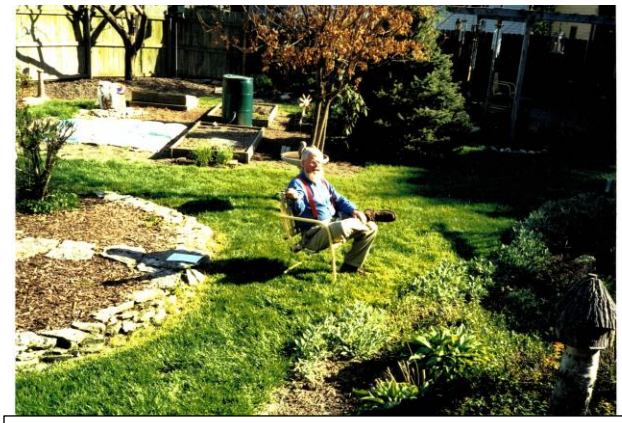
Master Gardeners Delores Wright, Steve, and Jane Ford at Gee Farms in Jackson Michigan circa 2000. Many unusual plants in the evergreen and grounds section of the Display gardens were purchased there.

For almost 20 years, Master Gardener Kate Ferguson served as coordinator for the Display Gardens, Youth program, and the Master Naturalist program.

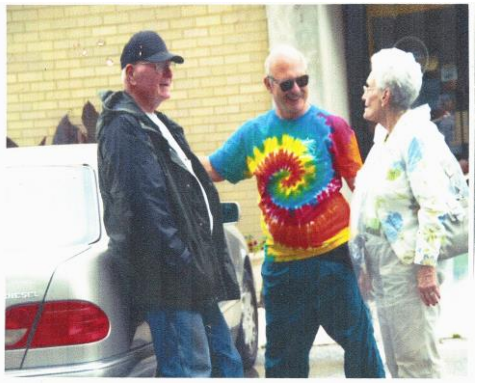
Allene Tew and Betty Blanchard became best friends forever as a result of their taking the Master Gardener training. Betty remained an active volunteer well into her nineties.

Master Gardeners Dave Thierer, Barb Nord, and Ruth Sender win awards for their delicious soup at the fall Garden volunteer day. Everyone was bringing soup and other goodies to the workday events; so we created a fun contest where volunteers judged the “best” soups of the day.

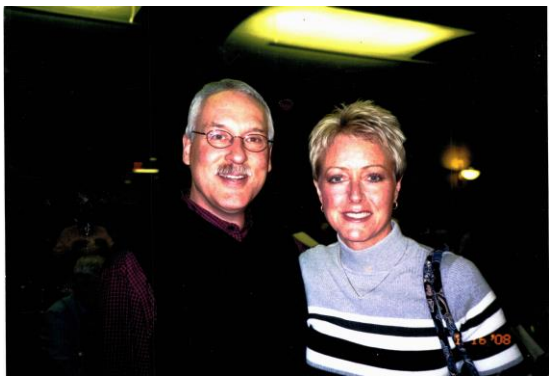
Master Gardeners Betty Allen, Don Orban, and George Wappes peruse a newspaper article featuring the Display Gardens. Very funny….



In the early 2000's Master Gardener Jane Ford – the editor of the Master Gardener newsletter Across the fence for over 20 years – organized a Roger Swain (one of the original hosts of the Victory Garden series on PBS) visit to Fort Wayne.



Master Gardener Art Stahlhut, Honorary Master Gardener Ken Millikan, and Master Gardener Kay Musgrave commiserate at a Garden workday event.



I did a weekly call-in gardening segment on Rick Wolf's WOWO's House Calls show for almost 20 years. Andrea Wolf answered gardening questions at the Phone Response Center for many years.

Hoggles'
Demented Cat Logic

To my caregiver: *I know that you spend hours thinking of ways to torment and demean my existence. ...This time you have gone too far. Changing my name from "Hoggles" to "Nootkatone" is the last straw……*

To *subscribe to this electronic newsletter, send an email to kemeryr7@frontier.com - or text 260-431-6893. I will not share information with others. Ricky Kemery will not knowingly discriminate in any way based on race, gender etc…*