

GREEN PAGES

A newsletter for people interested in horticulture and natural resources in Western Wisconsin February 2015

“Keeping it Green!” with Erin Lafaive

Inside this issue:

“Keeping it Green” With Erin Lafaive **1**

Upcoming Events **2**

“Think Spring!” Garden Seminar **3**

February Gardening Tips **4**

February Gardening Tips Cont. **5**

Master Gardener Volunteer Training **6**

It’s cold and snowy outside but you can get a glimpse of green, growing things on the show “Keeping it Green”. It’s created by Chippewa Valley Community Television and airs on their **channels 993 and 994** as well

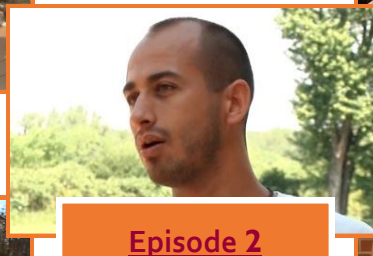
as on their YouTube channel. “Keeping it Green” is a show that presents gardening techniques and environment friendly information to grow your best yard and gardens. Click on the pictures below to



[Episode 1](#)



[Episode 3](#)



[Episode 2](#)



[Episode 4](#)



[Episode 5](#)

Gardening Fun Facts:

- The Bamboo plant can grow 35 inches in a single day.
- In 1600s Holland, Tulip bulbs were worth more than their weight in gold.
- The sugar maple was made the official tree of Wisconsin in 1949.

UW– Extension has a New Intern!

University of Wisconsin student Andrew Maher will be joining the staff of UW-Extension as an intern this coming school semester.

In addition to helping with various pieces of writing by UWEX, Andrew Maher will be helping format the Green Pages Newsletter.

Andrew Maher is an English Major and Japanese Minor at UWEC, and is excited to help UWEX spread horticultural knowledge and awareness.



UW
Extension

Eau Claire County

Green Pages

Ready, Set, GROW!



“In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt. “

~Margaret Atwood

Registration is open for the upcoming “Ready, Set, Grow” Winter Garden Seminar. The day-long event will be held on Saturday, February 7, 2015 at the Chippewa Valley Technical College in Eau Claire. This seminar is sponsored by the Eau Claire Area Master Gardener Association.

The keynote speaker is **Phil Pellitteri**, former Entomologist with UW-Madison, presenting on, **“Things Can’t Stay the Same – The Ever changing Landscape of Wisconsin Insects”**.

Participants have a choice of presentations in three breakout sessions during the morning and afternoon featuring speaker topics on vines, iris, vegetable gardening, string a hobby/small acreage farm, Emerald Ash Borer, and much more.

The event will also include lunch and snacks, many door prizes, and local vendors.



Registration starts at 8:00 a.m. and keynote speaker begins at 9 a.m. Registration costs **\$30/person** before **January 30** and **\$35 thereafter**, including at the door.

Registration information can be found at eauclairemastergardeners.weebly.com

For more information, contact Erin LaFaive at:

(715) 839-4712 or erin.lafaive@ces.uwex.edu or visit eauclaire.uwex.edu.

Tree and Shrub ID in Winter - Two Sessions

Beaver Creek Reserve is holding two Tree and Shrub ID seminars this month.

Leaves are one of the biggest clues for tree and shrub identification. So what do you do when there are no leaves? Winter offers a special time to appreciate trees and shrubs in a totally different way.

This program will point out unique bud and bark characteristics of many of our native trees and shrubs, making identification possible even in winter! A power-point and a hands-on session inside will be followed by an outdoor hike around the Reserve to apply what we learned inside. Some easy tips and a simple winter tree and bark key will be provided for participants to take home.

Bring warm clothes and boots along for the outdoor portion of the program.

Registration and full payment required by Feb. 5 for the midweek session, and Feb. 17 for the weekend session.

The pricing for the event is \$5 for members and \$8 for nonmembers.

Find registration info at their website address below.

<http://tinyurl.com/lz9cbq5>



Think Spring Garden Seminar

The Chippewa Valley Master Gardener Association and the Chippewa County UW-Extension Office are hosting the annual Think Spring Garden Seminar on Saturday, February 21, 2015 at the Chippewa Falls Middle School from 8:00am to 3:00pm.

Cost to attend is \$25 regular and \$15 for students which includes lunch and refreshments. A registration brochure is available here, <http://tinyurl.com/k9lclf4>

Speakers and topics include: Don Engebretson, The Renegade Gardener, "Top 10 Gardening & Landscaping Blunders—and How to Avoid Them!"; "Embrace Your Shade: Plants and Design Tips for Shady

Spaces"; Dr. Brian Smith, UW-Extension Fruit Crop Specialist, "Fruit Trees For Backyard Spaces"; Michael and Kathi Rock, "Gardening for Hummingbirds"; Todd Chwala, Eau Claire City Superintendent of Parks, Forestry, and Cemeteries, "Trees: Protecting a Growing Investment"; Mary Stewart, Going to Pot Orchards, "Get Your Orchid Groove On".

Workshops included in this years seminar are listed individually below.



Making Herbal Cordials and Sodas: A Tasty Way to Enjoy Herbs

In this workshop participants will learn how to use herbs to make cordials, a special blend of herbal extracts and natural sweetener such as honey which can be used in teas, sparkling water, marinades, or roasted vegetables.

Participants will sample cordials and sodas as their history and preparation is discussed. They will go home with a sample bottle from the class demo and herbal

handouts for making their own creations.

Fee for the class is \$20.00—Class limited to 25.

Kerri Kiernan has completed an herbal internship in Oregon and is the owner of River Prairie Apothecary.

“Earth laughs in a flower. “

~Ralph Waldo Emerson

Grow Your Own Floral Design

In this workshop Faye Ryszkiewicz describes how to grow annuals and perennials that will work well for cutting and shows how to create basic floral designs. Participants will create their own arrangements to take home. Fee for the workshop is \$30.00.



Gardening Tips: Courtesy of: Sharon Morrisey, Consumer Horticulture Agent, University of Wisconsin-Extension in Milwaukee Co.

★ Snow and ice are still a reality. Use sand or cat litter rather than salt to melt ice along sidewalks and driveways to prevent soil and plant damage. Do not use granular fertilizer either because excessive amounts of it, too, can damage plants. It also pollutes lakes and rivers as it runs off paved surfaces and frozen ground. For this reason never fertilize on frozen ground or over the snow.



★ Plan this year's vegetable and flower gardens especially now if you intend to start anything from seed. Order seeds early for the newest introductions since supplies are usually limited.



★ Prepare for starting seeds indoors by gathering supplies and equipment. The three most crucial elements for successful seed starting are using sterile media, arranging for supplemental light and providing bottom heat of about 70 degrees. Be sure fluorescent fixtures and bulbs are compatible since the newer low-wattage tubes will overheat in old fixtures. Lights should be adjustable so they may be moved to keep them within 4 - 6 inches of the tops of the seedlings as they grow.

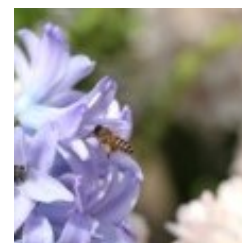
★ Plan to get your children into the garden this year. Start with projects indoors like a pan of grass for their Easter baskets or oats for the cat. Start a sweet potato or an avocado pit. If you have supplemental lighting, plant a tub of lettuces and garlic cloves and herbs.



★ On nice days, get outdoors to survey your trees and shrubs looking for evidence of feeding of rabbits, mice, and deer. Check snow covered leaf litter and untrimmed grass at the base of young fruit trees and ornamentals. It is not too late to use spray repellents or to install tree guards or chicken wire cages around your plants.



★ With two weeks left until Valentine's Day, its time to start forcing those spring flowering bulbs you've been keeping chilled. The little bulbs like crocus, hyacinth, and scilla should have received 8 weeks of chilling whereas tulips and daffodils need 12 - 14. If you chilled your bulbs without potting them up, do so now. Then keep them at 55 - 60 degrees in a dark place for 2 weeks to allow roots to form. Then bring them out into a warmer, brighter location to start growth and flowering. If rooting and/or sprouting have already begun, simply pot them up, water them and place them in a sunny location.



★ Visit your local library to begin researching that backyard pond you have been longing for.



★ Remove built-up dust and grime from the leaves of houseplants with a shower. Plants with large leaves can be wiped clean by hand with a cloth or a pair of clean, soft gloves. Use one hand on the upper surface and one below. Water works just

Gardening Tips: Continued

fine to clean and shine leaves. Some leaf polish products contain oils which will clog leaf pores.



- ★ Indoor foliage plants are still said to be "resting" because light levels are low, day length is short and temperatures are cool. Plants do not use as much water or fertilizer under these conditions so be careful not to over water. Cool, wet soil will cause root rot. Put off transplanting, too, until April when brighter conditions will promote more vigorous growth.

- ★ Turning the compost pile can be done whenever it isn't frozen solid. Snow provides some moisture and the composting process can continue, although slowly, all winter long.



- ★ Check stored cannas, dahlias, tuberous begonias, and gladiolus. Pot up ones that have sprouted and grown a couple of inches or find a cooler spot to hold them a little longer. Buy new tubers and roots now to start indoors for planting once the danger of frost has passed.

- ★ Start seeds for the very first vegetable crop now - onions. Keep the foliage cutback to about 4" until time to transplant outdoors in April. Use what you clip off in salads to add some zip.



- ★ Cloves of garlic can be planted in pots indoors to sprout for zesty seasoning.

- ★ Sow seeds indoors for impatiens, begonias, petunias, nemesia, dusty miller, and snapdragons.



- ★ Drooping roses can be revived by laying them, completely submerged in warm water and recutting the stem ends under water. Leave them in the water to rehydrate for a half hour before returning them to the vase.

- ★ Keep feeding the birds until spring bloom since they have come to depend upon you for food. Even greater success at attracting birds to your property can be assured by providing a fresh source of water at all times. This must be kept free of ice and available until spring thaw. Stake up a discarded Christmas tree near a feeder for protective cover but far enough away that dogs and cats can't hide there to ambush your feathered friends at the feeder.



- ★ Being the end of the dormant season, now is the best time to prune most woody landscape plants and fruit trees. You can delay pruning birch, maple, black walnut, and elm since these tend to "bleed" when sap starts to move again due to snow melt and thawing soil. The dripping sap does not harm the trees, however.



Applications sought for Master Gardener Volunteer Training

Training for the Level 1 Master Gardener Volunteer Program begins February 26, 2015 at the UW-Extension Eau Claire County office. Trainings will take place from 1-4PM every other week until July 30, 2015. After completing the training, each person can become a certified Master Gardener Volunteer by providing 24 volunteer hours in UW-Extension approved projects, each year.

Training focuses on how to assist the general public with common garden-related questions at the

Ask-A-Master Gardener Booth during the Farmer's Market or at the Eau Claire Extension office. In addition, volunteers learn about other UW-Extension horticulture volunteer needs such as the summer youth garden program.

Most trainings are held at the Agriculture and Resource Center building in Altoona. Access to a computer with internet availability is necessary to watch

videos and obtain other activities (accommodations can be made at the Extension office).

Course topics include: pest management of mammals, insects, and diseases, lawn and tree care, and other general gardening practices.



To be considered for this volunteer program each person must pass a background check, have their application approved, and sign a volunteer agreement. Previous gardening experience isn't necessary.

The fee for this training is \$100 per person to pay for training materials. A

limited number of scholarships are available. Seating is limited and the registration deadline is **February 13, 2015**. Participants must be at least 18 years old.

For more information and a registration packet visit

<http://tinyurl.com/p6y7jtf>

or contact the extension office at

715.839.4712.

Eau Claire County
UW-Extension

227 First Street W

Phone: 715.839.4712

Fax: 715.839.6277

E-mail:

Erin.LaFaive@co.eau-claire.wi.us

***“The man who has
planted a garden
feels he has done
something for the
good of the whole
world. “***

~Charles Dudley

Warner

The University of Wisconsin Extension provides affirmative action and equal opportunity in education, programming and employment for all qualified persons regardless of race, color, gender/sex, creed, disability, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital or parental, arrest or conviction record or veteran status.” If you need an interpreter, materials in alternate formats or other accommodations to access this program, activity or service, please contact Erin LaFaive at 715-839-4712 as soon as possible preceding the scheduled event so that proper arrangements can be made in a timely fashion.