



# The Garden Gate Newsletter

Boone County Master Gardener Association  
March & April 2019

**NEXT MEETING** – Monday, March 18, 2019  
Networking at 9 a.m., with meeting at 9:30  
followed by education.

**Location:**

Boone County Fairgrounds, Annex Building

**Hosts:**

Lori Crosby, Colleen Hendricks, Linda Tripp's, Sandy Robinson

Note: Fran Lind is now coordinator of the meeting hosts



**Boone County Master Gardeners  
2018 Officers**

President	Linda Trips 765-325-2803 Trips7@live.com
V. President	Karen Hogan 317-748-3118 <a href="mailto:mamaw-59@att.net">mamaw-59@att.net</a>
Treasurer	Michelle Mangold 317-698-5129 <a href="mailto:micman28@aol.com">micman28@aol.com</a>
Secretary	Barb Burkhardt 317-873-1022 <a href="mailto:sparky8505@att.net">sparky8505@att.net</a>

**From the President... The Pacing Wild Lioness** In mid to late winter, I begin to feel like a trapped wild lioness pacing back and forth, looking for the first signs of spring. As a gardener, I pour through magazines, garden books, catalogs, gardening websites, and read my notes from past years. Each year I dream of making my yard and gardens the best little plot of heaven on earth that I can. I've kept a small, somewhat disorganized, journal of my gardens, notes on various pieces of paper, sketches, clippings from magazines, etc. And each shoved in a drawer, basket, etc. What a Mess! This Spring I've decided to be more organized. My new "Garden Journal" is a large notebook binder, with pockets for plant tags, receipts, and pictures, plenty of loose leaf paper for notes, and a calendar (this is just for quickly referencing the dates). The notebook is divided into multiple sections, ie. the 4 seasons, sketches and pictures of my gardens, a section for my favorite garden centers and nurseries, and a "Dream" section for plants and ideas that I would love to have. (cont'd page 2)

**2019 Gardenfest on Saturday, April 6 from 9-3**

This is our fundraiser, and a fun event. Please see the promotional flyers attached.

Have you signed up to volunteer?

Questions? Let us know.

Deadline for Newsletter April 30, 2019 to [catronh@purdue.edu](mailto:catronh@purdue.edu)

**GARDENING**  
*It's cheaper than therapy, and you get tomatoes!*

**Facebook:** *Master-Gardeners-of-Boone-County* and *Boone County Community Gardens*  
**Websites:** [www.mastergardenerboonecounty.org](http://www.mastergardenerboonecounty.org) and <http://bewellboone.org/CommunityGardens.html>

## Club News and Opportunities

### Letter from the president (cont'd from page 1):

I keep my journal in the sunroom so that when I come in from gardening I can quickly jot down my notes and thoughts. Late February notes are the days of 70 degrees, the first signs of spring bulbs emerging, and the song of the robin yesterday! Spring! A time to come out of hibernation, wake up. My "Lioness" pacing days will soon be replaced with long days in the garden and outdoors, soaking up the sunshine, getting my hands down into Mother Earth again. A time for rejuvenation, and a more organized journal to record it. Oh, I'm sure that I will still have some little slips of paper with garden notes but they can easily be slipped into one of the pockets of the journal. Come on Spring!

*Linda*

(Linda Trips)



### Sunflower Head-clipping Weevil

At the November Master Gardener meeting, Susan Kovach asked if anyone had the problem of purple coneflowers having their flower heads almost cut off and left hanging toward the ground. Four summers ago, I noticed this problem in my garden.

This is the work of the sunflower head-clipping weevil (*Haplorhynchites aeneus*) a well-documented pest of cultivated and wild sunflowers in the Great Plains. Sunflowers are the preferred plant but the weevil also attacks purple coneflowers and other plants in the aster family.

The shiny black to brownish-black weevil is a little over 1/4" long with the measurement including an exceptionally long, curved snout. As with all weevils, the mouthparts are located at the end of their snout. The females insert their snouts and chew a ring of holes around the stem one to two inches below the flower head. The flower stem is not completely cut; this weakens the stem to the point where it eventually breaks over, leaving the flower hanging by a thin strand of tissue.

There is only one generation per year. Only females are thought to perform the clipping behavior. “The female enters the flower to feed on the pollen and lay eggs. The flower eventually falls to the ground, eggs hatch and the immature weevil, a worm-like larva, moves into the ground for winter. Next spring the larvae pupates, then transforms into a weevil and starts feeding on the flower stems in mid-summer.” (Melinda Myers website) It is speculated that the weevil's odd head-clipping behavior reduces larval exposure to plant defense chemicals, and also prevents other insects from competing for the seed head prize.

Removing the flower heads that are still hanging as well as those that have dropped to the ground can help to reduce populations next year. I have found that if the flower head has turned brown before it drops off, it is often difficult to find it on the ground. When removing the flowers from the stem, hold a bucket of soapy water under the flower and clip the rest of the stem, dropping the flower into the bucket. This may help to kill any adults that are feeding in the flowers, reducing the populations and further damage to other plants. It also kills the larvae and prevents them from further developing.

In past summers, I have removed the damaged coneflowers and stems well below the weevil cut, put them in a plastic bag, sealed the bag, and put the bag in the garbage. Initially I cut the damaged part of the stalk just below the weevil cut leaving several inches of stem. When checking a few days later for further damage, I was not sure if I had removed the damaged stem and flower or the flower had dropped to the ground leaving a flowerless stalk. To solve this issue, I now cut back to the leaves below the weevil cut and I know that the flower head has not dropped to the ground. I tour my garden about every three days and carry a bag and clippers with me to remove any new damage. This minimizes damage and reduces future infestations.

Cutting off the damaged part of the plant and disposing of it is the best garden control method for the sunflower head-clipping weevil. Pesticides are not a good option. Pesticides should not be used on a plant in full bloom because of the risk of killing pollinators.

This weevil has been at work in Indiana for several years. The first mention I found of the weevil causing damage in Indiana is in an August 2011 Hoosier Gardener article by Jo Ellen Meyers Sharp. Other websites report the weevil in Illinois (2007) and Ohio (2009)

Jane Savage

# Native Plants for Spring Planting

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Native Plants Unlimited has their native plant catalog for 2019 available on line. There are native plants for sun to shade and moist to dry soils. There are flowering plants and grasses, rushes and sedges with a brief description of height, color/texture, bloom time, pot size and price. Quick kits are available with a variety of plants for pollinator, short stature prairie, and rain gardens. Just type in Native Plants Unlimited to view the full catalog. You can click "Subscribe to our mailing list!" to get future mailings.

Advance orders are due Saturday, March 23, 2019. An advance order is the best way to get exactly the plants you want. Pick up date begins May 3 at Geist Nursery, 9890 Mollenkopf Rd., Fishers. A map is included in the catalog. If you forgot to order a plant you want, there will be extras at the sale, which is open to the public. I find I cannot resist getting a full flat of plants from Native Plants Unlimited.

I will have Prairie Nursery, Westfield, Wisconsin native plant catalogs available at the next Master Gardener meeting. Many of the Native Plants Unlimited plants will be in the catalog with pictures. Prairie Nursery plant quality and customer service is excellent. There are plants in this catalog not offered by Native Plants Unlimited that you might find of interest.

<https://nativeplantsunlimited.com/>

Happy plant ordering. Jane Savage

## Education and Volunteer Information

**March 20th 2019: 7 -8 pm at Zion Nature Center, 690 Beech St., Zionsville, IN**

Free program. Registration required: [www.zionnaturecenter.org](http://www.zionnaturecenter.org)

### **When To Break Up With Your Plant**

Having trouble with a plant? Unable to decide if the plant needs special care or should you cut your losses and replace? Join Myrene Brown of Myrene's Garden for a program devoted to deciding if you are better with or without a plant.

[Zion Nature Center | Zionsville, IN](http://www.zionnaturecenter.org)

Find programs and activities available for children and the community at the Zion Nature Center.

[www.zionnaturecenter.org](http://www.zionnaturecenter.org)

### **Boone County Community Gardens**

We are planning for 2019 – increased education and community involvement. If you would like to teach a pop-up or scheduled class, let us know!

The planning team meets on the first and third Tuesday for now! Like us on FB.

Questions: Contact Holly Catron, 812-343-8554 or [catronh@purdue.edu](mailto:catronh@purdue.edu)

## Boone County Extension Homemakers

### First Tuesday Programs - Come Learn with Us

March 5 Monarch Butterflies

April 2 Organic Gardening

May 7 Essential Oils

June 4 Useful Recycling Hacks

Programs will be held in the Farm Bureau Community Building on the 4-H fairgrounds. Pre-registration is required by the Friday before the event. Call the Purdue Extension Office to register [765-482-0750](tel:765-482-0750). See attached file for more information on sessions.

NOTE: March presented by Dayna Stevenson and April by Holly Catron

Purdue Extension <https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/events/>

Mar. 8, 2019 (1:00 pm - 4:00 pm)	<b>Fruit Pruning Workshop</b>	<i>Meigs Horticulture Research Farm</i>
		■ Tippecanoe County Advanced MG Training Opportunities
Mar. 9, 2019 (9:00 am - 3:30 pm)	<b>Noble County Master Gardener Symposium</b>	<i>West Noble Middle School</i>
		■ Noble County Advanced MG Training Opportunities
Mar. 16, 2019 (8:00 am - 3:30 pm)	<b>Advanced Master Gardener Training – Madison County</b>	<i>Madison County 4-H Fairgrounds</i>
		■ Madison County Advanced MG Training Opportunities
Mar. 16, 2019 (8:00 am - 3:00 pm)	<b>Garden Fair 2019 – Putnam County</b>	<i>Putnam County Fairgrounds</i>
		■ Putnam County
Mar. 23, 2019 (8:00 am - 4:00 pm)	<b>2019 Spring Garden Show</b>	<i>Michigan City High School</i>
		■ La Porte County Advanced MG Training Opportunities
Mar. 23, 2019 (9:00 am - 3:00 pm)	<b>Morgan County Master Gardeners GardenFest and Pansy Sale</b>	<i>Hoosier Harvest Church</i>
		■ Advanced MG Training Opportunities Morgan County
Apr. 6, 2019 (9:00 am - 3:00 pm)	<b>Gardenfest 2019 – Boone County</b>	<i>Boone County 4-H Fairgrounds</i>
		■ Boone County
Apr. 6, 2019 (9:00 am - 4:00 pm)	<b>Monroe County Master Gardeners Garden Fair</b>	<i>Indiana National Guard Armory</i>
		■ Monroe County

## Other Opportunities

The **Hortuscope**, by Wendy Ford, highlights what is new in central Indiana gardening. Here is the link to that publication for January 2018: <http://hortuscope.info/>

There are many educational and volunteer opportunities. All count towards your training hours.