

Garden Thyme

March 2023

<https://extension.purdue.edu/porter>

Volume 9, Issue 2



"When there is little to no snow cover and little precipitation, plan on watering your trees one to two times per month until they begin leafing out in the spring. If the site is particularly windy, your trees may need more water. Water only when the temperature is above 40 degrees F and there is no snow or ice on the ground near your trees. Water early in the day, so the plants have time to absorb it before the temperature drops at night."

Winter Tree Watering Tips

<https://arbordayblog.org/treecare/winter-tree-watering-tips/>

Notes from Nikky

By Nikky Witkowski 219-465-3555

Extension Educator, Agriculture & Natural Resources

The Purdue Extension Master Gardener Training class has 23 individuals currently going through the program. They are meeting Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Some may transfer to another county; others are also taking the statewide virtual series and will come to us when that has ended. We are glad they are growing in knowledge and hope they will join us in the Porter County Master Gardener Association so we can "help others grow!"

The 2023 Annual Tree Sale is almost here! Be sure to place your order early if you want trees or new fruit plants. Some go very fast, and we have some different varieties than in the past. Pick-up is in the morning of April 1 at the 4-H building on the Porter County Fairgrounds. That day we will sell everything left. More info: <https://www.pcgarden.info/2023-annual-tree-sale/>

Weather forecasters have indicated that snow amounts are down this year, thus so are moisture levels. New plants, 1-3 years old and evergreens may need a little drink even during the frigid temperatures we are having.

Questions? Call 219-465-3555 and think spring!

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Record Breaking PCMGA Gardening Show

By LuAnn Troxel, PCMG Class of 2003

PCMGA hosted about 350 more paid attendees than ever before. If we count volunteers, vendors and children, we estimate that 2900 people attended. That is amazing! For those of you in the seed & bulb exchange area, you are very well aware of just how full that room was for hours and hours.

What an event! Frank Lizak managed to barter in \$1000 with the Garden Shed Garage Sale, and the Seed & Bulb area raised \$1400! Just wow! Mary Simon, our Vendor Coordinator, tells us that vendors are still smiling!

Thank you for your time, your energy, and your devoted passion to *helping others grow!* Whether you set up, volunteered on show day, pulled double duty or more, know that there is simply no possible way to have a show like this without incredible volunteers. That's what you are, incredible!

Check out the show: [17th Annual Gardening](#)



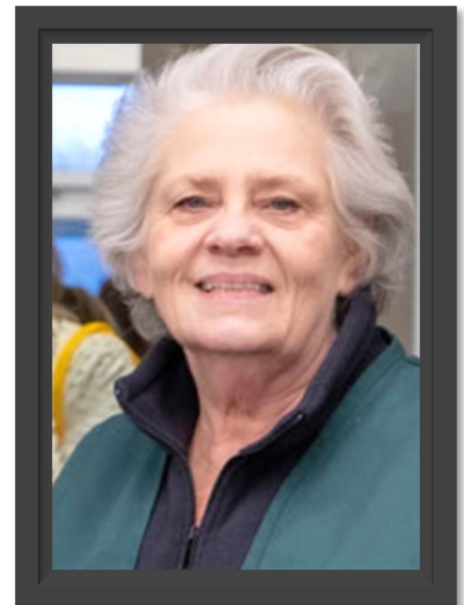
Pictured here are women from the South Central Indiana Master Gardener Association in Columbus, Indiana, <https://www.scimga.org/>, who traveled to the Gardening Show. It's impressive and speaks volumes upon hearing that groups travel as far as they do to come to our show. This association is about 23 strong, proud and very active. Rocky Lortz, their Education Coordinator, shared that they were recently certified as a Monarch Way Station. ~ submitted by Margaret Mudd

On behalf of our tireless show chair, Ann Cierniak, and a devoted team of leaders, we thank our volunteers from the bottom of our heart! ❤️

Mark your Calendar!!!

**18th ANNUAL
GARDENING SHOW**
January 20 2024

Porter County Master Gardeners Association
.....



Ann Cierniak,
2023 Porter County Master Gardeners
Gardening Show Chair

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Purdue Cooperative Extension Service Porter County Office

Master Gardeners Tips

Trips & Tools of the Trade

March 2004

Volume 9, Issue 1

Do you have an article or event of interest you would like to submit to the Newsletter? You may forward articles for review to the following address:

Purdue CES - Porter County
Attention: Newsletter Dept.
155 Indiana Ave., Suite 301
Valparaiso, IN 46383-5555
(219) 465-3555
(219) 464-8976 FAX

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1st Annual Seed & Bulb Exchange



Welcome To The Seed Exchange...



Hey This Stuff Looks Interesting...



How Many Tickets Would You Like...



So This Three Legged Aphid Says...

Inside this issue:

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The Next Door Prize Winner Is...



This Is The Way We Sort Our Seeds...

Next MG Meeting

Our next Master Gardener Association meeting is scheduled from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on the night of Wednesday, April 21st at the Porter Co. Admin Bldg. - Rm 309. Check out the calendar of events on page 3.

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MY SUPPLY LIST:

- Oil drain pan (3.5"x 15")
- Potting soil mix (6-8 qt)
- Terracotta pot (3")
- Round flat stone (3")
- 4 Plants (tallest is 7")
- 3 Sticks 4" tall
- 3 Sticks 3" tall
- Twine, about 12"
- Angel figurine (3")
- Decorative bark/stone



My first try at a Resurrection Mini-Garden was in 2011 when I was practicing all kinds of mini-gardens to teach my students (male offenders) at Westville Correctional Facility. For this garden I sowed grass seed to cover the tomb as is often done. On Easter morning, I joyously rolled the stone away!

With the growing trend of Resurrection Gardens, or Easter Gardens as they are sometimes called, plus the growing interest of my young grandchildren, I thought it a great idea to create one this spring.

Know that you can create your garden any way you wish—so many options to enjoy! Any size and kind of pots, any plants, and any top dressing will do. I'll share with you how I made mine this year with items from a hardware store, resale shop, and my yard.

PHOTO A: Collect all the supplies. Cut the twine in thirds. Wrap a section of twine around a 3" and 4" stick to make a cross. Repeat twice.

PHOTO B: Place soil in pan and center pot with the opening slightly tilted up.

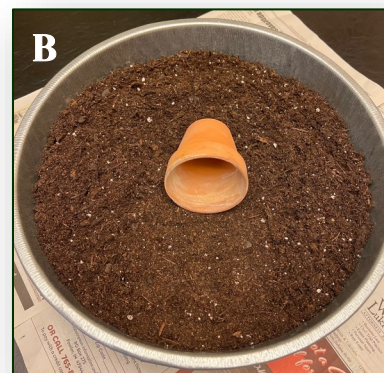
PHOTO C: Arrange plants around the pot. Add more soil to plant them. Carefully place soil over the top of the pot.

PHOTO D: Add crosses behind the pot. Place flat stone over opening of the pot (tomb). Place the angel to stand guard. Add your choice of bark/stones/pebbles for top dressing and path.

Water the plants carefully with a spray bottle. Dampen the top dressing to help it settle and stay in place. Keep watered.

Display your garden in a prominent place on Good Friday.

Roll the stone away on Easter morning!



After Easter, I intend to remove the resurrection story items and store them for next year. Then I will turn my mini-garden into Jurassic Park!



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Last year was the year I was hit with dahlia delirium. Can I start my gardening life over again to discover them sooner? Oh, I had some wins and losses over the years, but there were just SO many ball dahlias I wanted in the new Longfield 2022 catalog. God bless her, my daughter Christmas gifted me with eight varieties on my wish list.

I studied all winter, so I would do it right. As it turns out there is contradictory info out there and, sometimes, too much knowledge is NOT power.

What I've learned after a summer of raising dahlias:

1. When they say at least a 12" pot, that's what they mean! Several dahlias did not even bloom.



Dahlia Delirium

By Monica Kerr
PCMG Class of 2004

2. Start them early. They didn't arrive until late April, just before vacation. Quickly potted, in large, black nursery pots, I put them by the

garage window. My sister-in-law came and spritzed them twice a week. A slow start.

3. I was afraid to plant them in heavy clay so amended the soil. Sand was added as they like water and well-drained soil. Dahlias in the ground did better than expected and much better than potted ones.

4. Most advise that dahlias can't get too much sun (after all they come from Mexico). I quickly learned the pots on the deck "required" a break in the mid-afternoon.

5. Last but not least, when they say use a strong stake, they mean it! I can't believe how big and strong the stems grew!

The dahlia seen above is *Labyrinth*.



The garnet color ball is "Cornel". The beautiful coppery/orange dahlia was not as ordered, but Longfield catalog ID's as "Maarn". A happy mistake, a super win! The tall, butterscotch dahlia was a tuber that had broken off the clump, no "eyes" and tossed on the ground. SURPRISE! A dahlia came up. Again, nothing I had ordered but believe it is "Glory Van Noordwijk".

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Melissa and Caroline Mills

Meet a Master Gardener

Melissa Mills, PCMG Class of 2021

I took the Master Gardener course because I wanted to learn more about gardening in Indiana. After moving from Burlington, KY in 2020 and Hutchinson, KS before that, I found that Northern

Indiana climate has its own gardening challenges.

My first Kansas garden was a disaster: a 4 foot by 4 foot shady plot under my crab apple tree. Peppers, tomatoes, herbs were planted and barely grew. Rabbits gobbled up what did grow. Reading a garden book a year, I started over with a small, sunny garden plot, adding a little each year.

That was 15 years ago. Since then, I've grown cantaloupe, garlic, okra, sweet corn, greens, herbs, onion, potato, tomatoes, cabbage, figs, raspberries and more. I've brewed manure teas, experimented with compost bins and companion plantings. I love irises, peonies, and all succulents. Spider plants, inch plants and pothos have gained my attention; recently Swiss cheese monstera, ferns, shamrocks, and more.

My husband of 17 years, Todd, and I have two teenagers, Caroline 15, and Logan 14. I love my job as an Outdoor Educator with Dunes Learning Center.

My favorite thing about gardening is how it weaves together all that I am. First my faith- you can do everything right preparing soil and planting seed, but it's only God that makes it grow. Second, family- we plant, pick and eat together, and my teens are growing like crazy. Third my art, the outdoors, and teaching- it's been a pleasure sharing my passion by presenting propagation at both the Gardening Show and Duneland Garden Club.

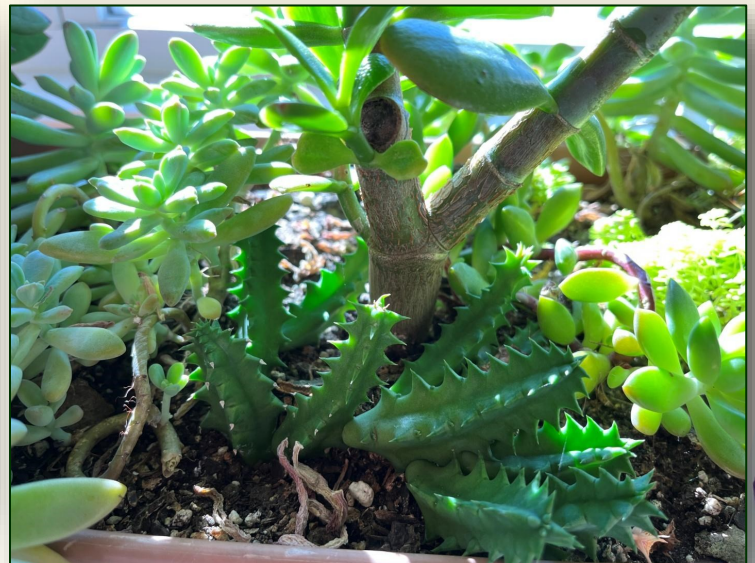


Above: Melissa's celebratory Christmas cactus

Below: Melissa's thriving succulents



Logan, Todd, Melissa and Caroline Mills



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GARDEN WANDERER

By Wilma Willard, PCMG class of 2011

Greece's Pieces



Why do we call them olives and not Greece's Pieces?

The ancient Greeks smeared olive oil on their bodies and hair as a matter of grooming and good health. Olive oil was used to anoint kings and athletes in ancient Greece. It was burnt in the sacred lamps of temples and was the "eternal flame" of the original Olympic games. Victors in these games were crowned with its leaves.

Right: Wilma is on original victor stand at ancient Olympia.

Below: A small part of Amfissa Valley is seen through bus window.



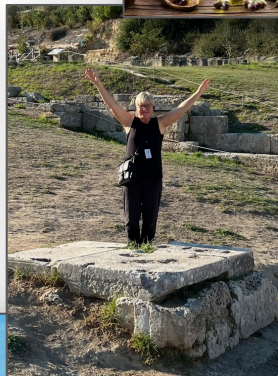
I looked out the bus window and all I saw was a sea of olives. We had seen many olive trees in Greece during our 14 day tour there in October of 2022, but now the valley seemed never ending with this national treasure. After visiting Athens—Mars Hill, Corinth, Berea, Thessaloniki, Ephesus, and Patmos we were on our way to Delphi and Philippi (sites all relating to the New Testament accounts of Paul the Apostle), when we came upon Amfissa.

The olive grove of Amfissa Valley is one of the oldest in Greece, the largest continuous one in the Balkans and dates back 3000 years. It covers a space of 55,000 acres with more than 1,200,000 trees. Almost 70% of them are more than 150 years old with deep corrugations and surpassing 33 feet in height.

Autumn olive, *Elaeagnus umbellata*, a native of Asia, is an invasive species throughout the United States. But the European olive, *Olea europaea*, found in the Mediterranean Basin, is in the family Oleaceae which includes species such as lilac, jasmine, forsythia, and the true ash tree. Thousands of cultivars of the olive tree are known. The inaccessible for very suitable all harvested while 20% are



semi-arid valley floor, too urban development, is for olives. About 80% of olives are turned into oil, used as table olives.



Almost every dinner begins with the authentic Greek Salad. Enjoy the juicy red tomatoes, crisp cucumber, sharp onion, feta, oregano and, of course, olive oil and kalamata olives! Check out this recipe for a healthy and delicious start to your meal:

<https://www.olivetomato.com/authentic-greek-salad/>

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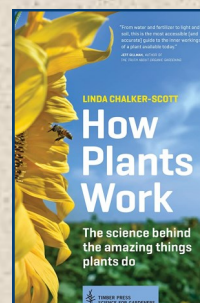
Read All About It!!!

By Zann Wilson, PCMG Class of 2002

PCMG now offers book club events as educational opportunities. We invite all to join us. We have read and discussed *Finding the Mother Tree* by Suzanne Simard and *How Plants Work* by Linda Chalker-Scott. The next book selection and discussion date will be announced soon. These books are available through the local library, but make excellent gift suggestions and personal

reference library possibilities too.

Last month's *How Plants Work* discussion included eight PCMG members and a lively discussion covering thoughts about practical application of garden concepts like mulching, growing native plants, and additions of mycorrhiza fungi into plantings. Members participating represented a large swath of the county locations and offered their experiences with varied garden types like ornamental versus fruit and vegetable into the discussion. This cross section of location and garden styles added to the productivity of the conversation. Watch for future book club events. Come join us and learn while getting to know fellow MGs.



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Earn volunteer credit for contributing to the newsletter;
contact the Extension Office for more information.
219-465-3555

Did you miss Maureen Phillip's presentation
on Indoor Seed Starting?
See it here, as well as additional resources.
<https://www.pcgarden.info/watch-this-video->

Seed Starting

Maureen Phillips
Porter County Advanced Master Gardener



See educational videos of former **PCMG Gardening Show**
seminars found at pcgarden.info on the Member Pages.

The **Purdue** website has added a link to numerous on-line
education opportunities:

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/education-hours-opportunities/>

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

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/yardandgarden/>

<https://www.purdue.edu/hla/sites/master-gardener/continuedhours/>

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