

Email: info@minnehahamastergardeners.org

Editor Pat Hubert, Master Gardener

Ask a Master Gardener...



Saturday, August 15, 10 am – 12 noon
Sound Gardening Practices for

Minnehaha County

Location: Jasper Educational Center

Puzzled by a peony problem?

Sedum situation has you stumped? Bring your questions to the Mary Jo Wegener Arboretum any Saturday this summer and ask a Master Gardener! Minnehaha Master Gardeners will be available in the Jasper Educational Center on Saturdays from 10 am till noon!

Can't make it in person? Submit your question by email!

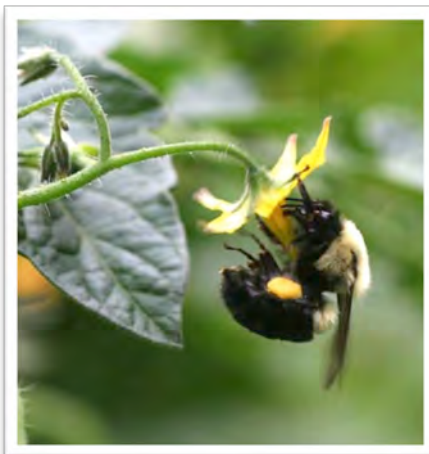
info@maryjowegenerarboretum.com

For more information on the Arboretum and "Ask a Master Gardener" visit the Mary Jo Wegener Arboretum website at <http://www.maryjowegenerarboretum.com/>



The Friendly, Singing Bumble Bee

By Deanna Streeter, Master Gardener



Bumble Bee pollinating a tomato flower

This time of summer bumble bees are busy visiting flowers to collect the pollen protein to feed to their young. Bumble bees do not swarm, make honey or protect their hive like their "cousins" the honey bee.

If you see a big furry bumble bee nearby, remember she is busy collecting pollen and not after you! Just remain still and enjoy watching her! She will quickly move on to the next flower. There are about 45 species of bumble bees in North America and about 25 of those have been sighted in South Dakota. Bumble bees typically forage for pollen within ½ mile of their small nest.

A minority of flowering plants do not have their pollen on the outside of the anther like most flowers. For this 8 % of plants the pollen is located inside the anther and released through tiny pores or slits in the anther. Shaking by wind or a vibrating toothbrush will release some pollen but the best pollination occurs at the correct frequency thus a tuning fork can cause pollen release.

Bumble bees have amazingly strong flight muscles and can cause pollen release by putting their wings in a neutral and moving those flight muscles vigorously. This movement makes a special humming or buzzing sound called sonification or "buzz pollination".

The bumble bee grabs the pollen laden anthers with its mandible and puts her wings in neutral and vibrates or "sings" at just the right frequency to vibrate the pollen loose from the anthers. The bumble bee usually sings her pollen releasing song somewhere between middle C and the orchestra tuning A!

This one minute YouTube video is worth a thousand words! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Y1OF4N7Eys>

Many late summer favorites including tomatoes, cucumbers, eggplant, zucchini, cantaloupe, watermelon, squash, and pumpkins are most effectively pollinated by our native humble bumbles. As you enjoy the late summer bounty this year thank the friendly singing bumble bees!



SDSU
Extension



From the Ground Up

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 Minnehaha Master Gardeners
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Photos from Priscilla Jurkovich garden

In the Herb Garden

By Priscilla Jurkovich, Master Gardener

Kentucky Colonel Mint *Mentha*

spicata is a perennial cultivar from the Lamiaceae (mint) family with a plant hardiness for zones 4-11. This fragrant plant will thrive in full sun or partial shade with well drained soil. Like all mints, it is easy to propagate by stem cuttings in water and plant when roots are ¼ to 1 inch long. The underground stolons or runners can be pulled up and transplanted by burying them an inch or two under the soil and new shoots will pop up. Mints can be invasive, but containing them in a bottomless container under the soil will

keep the plant under control.

The mint fragrance has been known to deter rabbits and attract pollinators with its lilac flowers. To harvest, clip the topmost mint leaves before the flowers form. Frequent harvests will cause the plant to become bushy. Although the Kentucky Colonel Mint is known for the Kentucky Derby Mint Julep, it can be used for any culinary use as any spearmint. Some culinary ideas are adding some fresh chopped sprigs just before serving to give a boost to steamed vegetables or fresh sprigs in ice cube tray and add water

to bring a harvest freshness to a cool drink.

Recipe for mint julep:

Put 6-8 Kentucky Colonel Mint leaves in the bottom of a glass, crush to release their flavor.

Add 1 teaspoon of sugar, 1- 2 oz Kentucky bourbon and seltzer water.

Garnish with a sprig of Kentucky Colonel Mint.



August 2015



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3 Add water to ponds and water structures as needed	4 Harvest and dry herbs for later use	5 Harvest onions when tops fall over and begin to dry	6	7 Enjoy some sweet corn!!	8
9	10 Monthly Minnehaha Master Gardener Mtg 7 pm	11	12	13	14 Sow grass seed if need to overseed bare spots	15 Begin to freeze or can surplus garden produce
16	17	18 Cut flowers from your garden and put in a vase for an indoor pop of color	19	20	21 Continue to harvest zucchini and cucumbers to keep plants productive	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Weeds! Weeds! Weeds! **Woolly Plantain**

By Paulette Keller, Master Gardener



Woolly plantain is a native, annual forb that flowers from May to August. It can grow anywhere from 2-12 inches tall, but usually is 2-5 inches tall. The inflorescence is a narrow, oblong spike 1-6 inches long. It is densely woolly and covered with short soft hairs. The flowers are 1/10 inch long and are densely crowded on the spike. The fruit is a 3-4 mm long and breaks apart at the middle and contains 2 seeds which are reddish-tan and are 2.5-3 mm long. The leaves are arranged alternately in a basal rosette. Winter rosette blades are oblanceolate, which means they are the widest at the tip of the blade. They are 0.5-3 cm long. The principal blades are linear (long and narrow with parallel sides) to oblanceolate and are 3-20 cm long and 0.5-1.5 mm wide. All surfaces are covered with woolly hairs. Woolly plantain has a fine taproot. It can be found throughout the Great Plains on rangeland, waste places, pastures and roadsides in all types of soil. It is especially abundant in sandy soils. Woolly plantain is most abundant in the year following a wet fall. It is not a serious weed and abundance may be an indicator or improperly grazed range land. Woolly plantain is of little use to cattle and big game animal because of its small size. It has more food value to small mammals and birds. The pollen can cause summer hay fever. Native Americans ate the leaves to treat internal hemorrhage and chewed the leaves to treat toothaches.

SDSU Extension Awards Seeds

By Chris Zdorovtsov, SDSU Extension Community Development Field Specialist

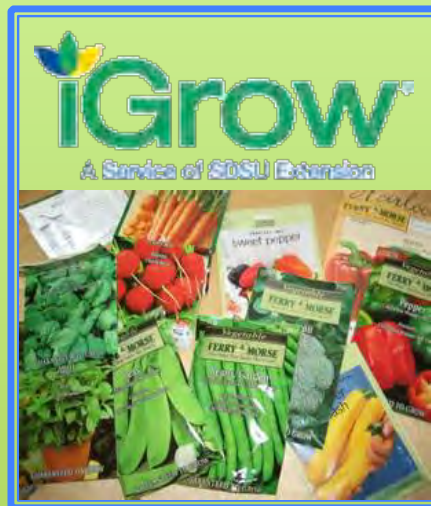
Twenty-nine educational garden programs across the state were awarded vegetable and flower seed packets from the SDSU Extension Seed Bank this spring.

Seeds were donated by Master Gardeners, seed dealers, individuals, and clubs across the state to assist youth and adult programs that are utilizing a garden to provide education. SDSU Extension is storing the seeds and coordinating the seed bank effort.

Projects that received 20 seed packets included gardens for schools, learning centers, daycares, 4-H clubs or other non-profit groups, where the produce will be used as part of the program or freely shared with those in need in the community. The awarded projects include a formal educational program with at least 15 participants.

This year's awardees include:

- Andes Central After School Program & Charles Mix County 4-H, Lake Andes
- Baltic Girl Scouts-Baltic School Community Garden
- Black Hills State University, Spearfish
- Bon Homme County 4-H Garden Club, Tyndall
- Boys & Girls Club of the Capital Area, Pierre
- Children's House Montessori, Rapid City
- Dell Rapids Public School-Our Growing Place Garden
- Deuel High School FFA, Clear Lake
- Haakon & Jackson County 4-H
- Laura B. Anderson Elementary, Sioux Falls
- Lifescape, Sioux Falls
- Lyman & Brule County 4-H



- Lower Brule Boys & Girls Club, Kennebec
- Meade County 4-H, Sturgis
- Milbank OST Program
- Oahe Family YMCA, Pierre
- Rainbow Daycare Centers, Redfield
- Rapid City Central High School
- Rapid City Solid Waste Operations
- Red Cloud Indian School, Pine Ridge
- SD Development Center, Redfield
- South Park Elementary School, Rapid City
- South Part PTO, Rapid City
- Tiospa Zina Tribal School, Agency Village
- USD Children's Center, Vermillion
- Westside Summer Program, Sisseton
- White Lake Elementary
- Young Women's Christian Association, Huron

The Seed Bank will again be available in 2016, with applications opening in mid-January. If individuals are interested in donating seeds packaged for the 2016 growing season, to learn more, or to be added to the Youth Gardening Listserv for regular updates about grants and trainings, contact [Chris Zdorovtsov](mailto:Chris.Zdorovtsov@sdstate.edu), SDSU Extension Community Development Field Specialist at 605-782-3290 or christina.zdorovtsov@sdstate.edu.

Unopened seed packets less than one year old are preferred for donation.

In BLOOM: Spuria Irises!

By Roine Klassenr, Master Gardener

Are you thinking about adding some more perennials to your garden in fall? Have you considered spuria irises? They are an excellent choice for planning your landscape. They enjoy full sun and good drainage; they don't appreciate wet feet except in the rainy season. Plan carefully when you plant them as they don't need to be split (divided) for at least 10-15 years. They don't like to be moved. The first winter they should be well mulched. Otherwise, they love fertilizer like well rotted manure; avoid fertilizers with high amounts of Nitrogen. The irises are found in Europe, Asia and Africa. Time of flowering and the number of blooms produced are impacted by where they are planted.

The flowers bloom about 1-2 weeks after the tall bearded iris on foliage that resembles cat tails. They may have stems 20-50 inches tall. The flowers are less likely to go over in the winds as other irises making them great to use as cut flowers. They are available in a wide range of colors, from purples, blues, yellows, whites and browns and combinations of these.



Master Gardener Notes

- MG's remember to send in your registration form for the State Update to be held in Pierre the weekend of Sept. 11th.
- Sept. MG meeting will be held on Monday, Sept 14 at 7 pm at the Extension building, located at 220 W 6th St Sioux Falls, SD 57104. JOIN US! ☺
- Remember to keep track of your hours for recertification. Forms and more information can be found at our website:
www.minnehahamastergardeners.org



Edibles: What Are We Picking and Eating Now? Cucumbers!

By Mary Lerssen, Master Gardener



I am neck deep in cucumbers! I love them fresh - salted, drained and then with mayo or made into dill, refrigerator pickles or relish. Definitely one of my favorite items to grow and one of the easiest to grow! And they are not just for eating either – their anti-inflammatory properties are great to reduce puffy eyes but we are talking gardening for eating!

Cucumbers or cukes have been grown for over 3000 years originating in Southern Asia. Botanically it is considered an accessory fruit as it comes from a flower. It is part of the gourd family. Cukes are considered a tropical fruit loving heat and water. Cukes are a healthy fruit with lots of vitamin B, vitamin C in the skin, etc. and are 90-95% water. There are vining and bush cukes. Bush cukes are great for containers or small gardens but usually are not as productive as the vining type. Vining cukes can be grown on a trellis (cattle panel or some other type of welded wire) or left to crawl on the ground. The use of a trellis makes picking them easier, keeps the fruit cleaner and saves on space.

The usual time to plant cukes is about 2 weeks after the last frost date since they need warm fertile soil. You can warm the soil with black plastic to hurry the

process. Composted manure or another slow release fertilizer can be used for cukes. You can purchase cucumber plants but I prefer planting the seed which is cheaper and I have cucumbers just as soon as others. The adjustment time for the plant is usually just as long as it takes for my seeds to come up. I usually plant several varieties of cukes. For eating we like the long burpless or English variety. For canning I plant a couple of pickling varieties.

Cukes do require bees/pollination from another plant so one cucumber plant will not be productive which is not a problem because most people plant cukes in a row or in a hill of 5 to 8 seeds. To encourage pollination some folks suggest spraying the plants with sugar water but I don't have any problems with pollination without that trick. The first flowers are male flowers followed shortly by the female flowers. You can tell the difference by looking at the base end of the flower. The female flower has a small cucumber while the male flower does not.



Edibles: "What Are We Picking & Eating Now?" continued from pg. 4



Cucumbers like water, however, not on the foliage. Minimize disease by keeping the cuke foliage dry. A soaker hose or hand watering is recommended. One inch per week is required depending on the heat, wind, soil, etc. To minimize spreading disease, avoid harvesting or handling the vines when the leaves are wet.

Cukes can have pests such as squash bugs, slugs, aphids or cucumber beetles. I find keeping them off the ground helps with pest and powdery mildew problems. Usually I have all the cucumbers I want by the time the pests become a real problem. With powdery mildew use a fungicide upon the first sign of the white patches on the leaves.

Harvest cukes at the size you enjoy eating them. It is recommended by purists that you cut or clip the cuke from the plant so you don't damage the plant. I usually use my fingers to snap the cuke from the vine and don't have any issues with damaging plants. Pulling the cuke off the plant is not recommended as it may damage the plant. Slicers are usually allowed to get a little bigger while cukes for pickles are usually picked a little smaller at 4 inches. Cukes should be picked daily or they are often too big for the best quality. An over ripe cuke is yellow and may be bitter. Cukes will keep in the refrigerator for 7 -10 days wrapped in plastic to hold in the moisture.

I have 12 quarts of dill pickles made and hope to make more plus some refrigerator pickles. I also make a cucumber relish that we use for hot dogs. My 12 year old granddaughter loves cucumbers cut up and eaten plain! What a great snack. Enjoy!

Minnehaha Master Gardeners

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[Recipient]

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