

MSU IN BLOOM

MSU HORTICULTURE GARDEN NEWS



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UPCOMING EVENTS

Houseplant and Succulent Sale	November 2
Holiday Make & Take	November 21
Master Gardener Idea Bed Contest Designs Due	December 1
Holiday Open House	December 5

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

BY KRISTIN GETTER, DIRECTOR OF THE MSU HORTICULTURE GARDENS

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL SUMMER

Our gardens looked fantastic this summer, thanks to our hard-working staff, students, and volunteers! We hosted 25 weddings, numerous tours, and countless children for family programming this summer. But, the fall is just as exciting for us.

FALL FUN

We are hosting our Fall Houseplant and Succulent sale on November 2, 2019 from 8am-4pm. This, and the spring plant sale, are how we earn most of our income to pay staff and students. For an updated inventory of what we will be selling visit https://www.canr.msu.edu/hrt/our_gardens/houseplant_and_succulent_sale. We will also be hosting a Holiday Make & Take event on Thursday, November 21, 2019 from 6:00pm to 8:30pm (see next page for more details).

CALLING ALL MASTER GARDENERS

Michigan Master Gardeners are invited to submit a garden design for the Master Gardener Idea Bed located at the southwest portion of our Demonstration Gardens. See the last two pages for more details on this contest and how to enter.

Fourth Annual

HOUSEPLANT & SUCULENT SALE



WHAT: PLANT SALE FUNDRAISER FEATURING SUCULENTS, AIR PLANTS, AND OTHER HOUSEPLANTS

WHEN: NOVEMBER 2nd, 2019, 8AM-4PM



**WHERE: MSU HORTICULTURE GARDENS
1066 BOGUE STREET
PLANT & SOIL SCIENCES BLDG
EAST LANSING, MI, 48824**





WORKSHOPS

Holiday Entertaining on a Shoestring

Learn about inexpensive tablescape ideas, along with appetizers and cocktails for all your holiday gatherings.

Tending Holiday Plants

Amp up your holiday décor game with live plants! Ever wonder how to keep your poinsettia pristine or get your Christmas cactus to re-bloom? In this workshop, we will demystify the world of holiday horticulture. Each attendee will receive a festive plant to spruce up their holiday décor and the confidence to keep it growing through the New Year, and beyond!


Evergreen Candle Centerpiece

In this workshop each participant will create a candle centerpiece arrangement to adorn your holiday table. Evergreens are such a versatile material we will use them as the canvas for our centerpiece and show you how to take it from your Thanksgiving table to your December holiday gatherings.

REGISTER NOW

To register, visit our website:

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/events/holiday-make-and-take>.



The Holidays are one of my favorite times of year. Family, entertaining, decorating, I love it all! But it can also be an overwhelming time with lots of places to be and things to do. At our Holiday Make and Take event on November 21st, we want to make your holiday gatherings include more fun and less chaos. More of the things that we love about this time of year and less of what we don't. This event will include quick and easy holiday recipes for all of your festive events. We will also have inexpensive holiday tablescape ideas that you can put together using items you already have, or items from the thrift or dollar store. I am including a festive sneak peak recipe to ignite your holiday spirit. Gather up your girlfriends, co-workers, and family members, then join us for an evening of food, ideas, plants and holiday fun.

Sweet and Spicy Holiday Mixed Nuts

The Ingredients

- 2 cups almonds raw
- 1 cup pecans raw
- 1 cup cashews raw
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup white sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/8 teaspoon clove
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne powder
- 1/4 cup water

Instructions

Spray the cooking pan of your slow cooker with non-stick spray. In a small bowl, mix together brown sugar, white sugar, spices and water. Add nuts to the slow cooker and pour over water, sugar and spice mixture, stir until fully combined. Place a paper towel over the top of the slow cooker pot and then place the lid on it. Set the slow cooker to HIGH and cook for 3 hours stirring every 20-30 minutes. When the cook time is up, remove the nuts from the slow cooker and spread them out in a single layer on a lined baking sheet. Let the nuts cool completely. Store in an airtight container until ready to serve

GIFTS THAT KEEP ON GIVING

BY MARIAH ARTZ, PROGRAM COORDINATOR

With the holidays just around the corner, you can make gift giving easier by gifting a garden membership or commemorative brick to a loved one.

2020 GARDEN MEMBERSHIP

Individual memberships start at just \$40 and provide multiple benefits throughout the year including:

- Free admission to over 200 American Horticulture Society reciprocal gardens
- VIP admission to our annual Spring Plant Sale the night before we open to the general public
- Receive a 10% discount on all plants purchased from the sale, as well as many other program discounts

Other levels include family, contributor, and patron, with additional benefits like admission to our Wine & Chocolate donor reception and more. For more information and to purchase a membership, please visit www.hrt.msu.edu/our_gardens/garden_memberships.

COMMEMORATIVE BRICK

Celebrate a life event or honor a special person, occasion, or memory with a commemorative brick placed within the gardens. We offer three locations to place bricks including the Perennial Garden Walkway, the Anniversary Plaza, and in front of the Liberty Hyde Bailey Sculpture in the Annual Trial Gardens.

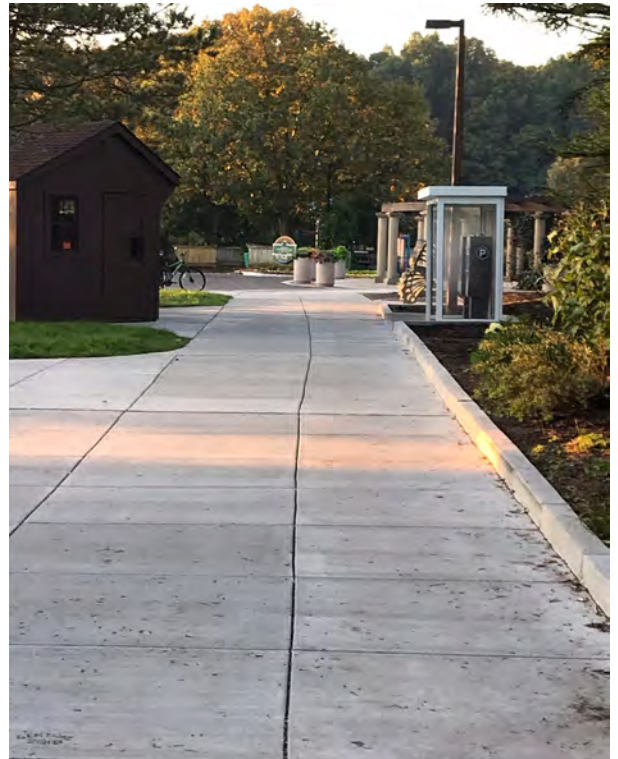
Proceeds from the sale of the bricks will benefit the Horticulture Gardens Endowment Fund, which directly generates revenue to allow us to maintain the gardens. Brick donations are fully tax deductible. For more information and to purchase a brick, please visit www.hrt.msu.edu/our_gardens/bricks.



CONSTRUCTION UPDATE 3.0

BY DAN BULKOWSKI, GARDEN AND GREENHOUSE MANAGER

Finally, the parking lot project is complete. Well, 99% anyway. If you remember from the last newsletter, the view from the back door showed newly installed sidewalks and a lot of construction fencing. Now, you can see the new visitor center in place on the left, two pay-by-plate kiosks on the right, and in the distance, the concrete planter bollards.



Outside our back door, under the green awning, the concrete benches that were placed temporarily 18 years ago were removed. In their place, metal benches were installed. These benches came from the Music Building on campus when it was renovated. These are much more comfortable than the cold hard concrete ones. Now it's cold, hard metal.

The final two pay-by-plate kiosks were installed on Monday, under a shelter to keep guests out of the rain and snow that's coming. The first two kiosks were installed by the Children's Garden entrance. So now there are four of them where DPPS will happily take your money to park in our lot.



Out on Bogue St, at the entrance to our parking lot, is this pretty (rather large) new sign. It happily tells you the hours and days you get to pay to park.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE 3.0 - CONTINUED



So, where Wilbir spent the last twenty plus years is now a grassy plain. He's enjoyed his temporary spot this summer overlooking the Children's Garden. But, for next year and years to come, his new nest will be across from the grassy plain facing incoming guests as they drive into our parking lot.

The whole idea of this new sidewalk project was to create a "safe passage" from our building to the Children's Garden. Very heavy, concrete planter bollards were placed along the sidewalk to prevent cars from possibly running into the kids on school field trips. But, of course, a school bus has already hit one of the planters and nudged it. With potential extra funds in the construction budget, we will be purchasing additional planters to make the walkway even more safe. Maybe not from busses though.



I might have already said how the old blue visitor/welcome center we built is gone, and now chickens and ducks live in it. So the new visitor center was purchased from Jim's Amish Structures north of St. Johns and delivered by them. One of our volunteers, who is a retired home builder, has built shelves, a desk, and countertop. It looks great inside, in a sort of rustic way. I love it. It will be ready and open for business next spring to welcome guests and answer their questions.

HOUSEPLANT AND SUCCULENT SALE

START YOUR SHOPPING LIST NOW!

BY DAEDRE MCGRATH
TRIAL GARDEN MANAGER

Our Fourth Annual Houseplant and Succulent Sale is rapidly approaching! We are thrilled to offer the widest selection of plants we've ever had. This year, we will have over 30 varieties of cacti, 196 varieties of succulents, and 82 varieties of foliage plants. There are thousands upon thousands of plants available (7,633 plants at the time of writing) for you to choose from. We look forward to sending these plants home with you. Here's what is on my personal shopping list in our three major categories: Cacti, Succulents, and Foliage Plants.

CACTI TO PIERCE YOUR HEART

Cacti are tough plants. They are difficult to kill, as long as you don't over-water them. Let the soil dry out completely in-between waterings. I water mine at home once a week. They are slow growing, making them more adaptable to indoor conditions than some other succulents. And they are so darn cute, you almost want to hug them...almost! Here are three of my favorites:

Tephrocactus articulatus var. papyracanthus

Okay, I know this one is a mouthful, but it's totally worth it! This very unusual cactus, also known as the Paper Spine Cactus, is a slow growing plant that can form a highly-branched clump over time. They have short glochids (that'll getcha!) as well as the prominent curly paper-like spines. We have two stock plants (the "mother" plants that we harvest all of our cuttings from) that are several years old now. They finally started to pump out the babies this year and I'm excited to have 32 of these plants to offer.

Epiphyllum guatemalense var. monstrose

Epiphyllums don't look like your typical cactus, but they are in the Cactus family. Also known as the Curly Locks Cactus, this plant is a monstrose form (meaning



Tephrocactus articulatus var. papyracanthus



Epiphyllum guatemalense var. monstrose



Rebutia muscula

monstrous, mutated, etc.) form of Epiphyllum with contorted growth, resulting from a genetic deformity. Curly Locks produces long-stemmed white flowers followed by hot pink fruit, which are similar to dragon fruit. Seed can be collected from the ripe fruit, which are easy to germinate if you want to try your hand at growing cactus from seed!

Rebutia muscula

This endearing, fuzzy little cactus can still bite, but I've actually handled it bare-handed without any ill effects. Also known as the Orange Snowball Cactus, this clump-forming cactus will start to produce many babies once it reaches a certain size. If you are lucky, it will treat you with a show of bright orange flowers, which really shine against the snow-white spines.

WHAT'S UP SUCCA?

Succulents require similar care as cacti and resent being over-watered. I water mine at home once a week, but could probably handle twice weekly watering (I'm just lazy). There is amazing diversity in this group of plants, but they all store water in fleshy stems and leaves. Here are three stand-outs:

Faucaria tigrina 'Jaws'

This diminutive succulent packs a punch with bright yellow daisy-like flowers! Also known as Tiger's Jaw, *Faucaria* are easy to care for and are clump-forming over time. The plants at our sale are about 2 years old and were actually grown from seed collected from our own stock plants! Every succulent collector should have one of these and we have over 80 to choose from!

Euphorbia milii 'Dwarf Apache'

New to the sale this year, this Crown of Thorns plant will produce bubblegum-pink flowers throughout the year. Often mistaken as cacti (as many have spines or thorns), *Euphorbia* are a diverse genus of succulents in the Euphorbiaceae family (along with Poinsettia and Croton). As with other succulents, water this plant infrequently, but regularly, as irregular watering can cause the plant to drop its leaves.

Portulacaria afra mediopicta

Portulacaria afra look like cute miniature trees and are often used for bonsai.



Faucaria tigrina 'Jaws'



Euphorbia milii 'Dwarf Apache'



Portulacaria afra mediopicta



Neomarica gracilis

We will actually have four varieties of *Portulacaria afra* in the sale this year, but *mediopicta* is my favorite. Also known as the Midstripe Rainbow Bush, this plant has colorful red stems and flashy, multi-colored leaves.

FOLIAGE PLANTS TO LEAF YOU SMILING

Foliage plants vary widely in water and light requirements, and ease of care, making them slightly more challenging, but they are well worth it! I water all my houseplants once a week, but some may need more frequent watering. Once you find that "happy place" in your home for a houseplant, it can reward you with years of enjoyment. Here are a few of our foliage plants I'm planning on taking home:



Philodendron 'Prince of Orange'

Neomarica gracilis

We have offered this plant, also known as Walking Iris, before in our plant sale, but we've never had many to offer. We will have 39 available this year! This is a real collector's item, although it is surprisingly easy to care for. The unassuming grass-like green foliage brings forth showy white and purple flowers during certain times of year. Flowers form at the tips of the leaves, which then transform into plantlets. The weight of the developing plantlets cause the foliage to droop, allowing the plantlets to root in the ground (if grown outside), or you can remove the plantlets to propagate them yourself.

Philodendron 'Prince of Orange'

This showy hybrid *Philodendron* has me excited and I'll definitely be taking one home. As new leaves unfurl, they are bright orange, fading to a lime green as they mature. These can get quite large over time. I look forward to seeing just how large they can get when I get mine home!

Zamioculcas zamiifolia

I only have good things to say about the ZZ Plant, as it is commonly referred to. This tough-as-nails plant can handle drought and very low light conditions and still looks pristine and healthy. These plants are challenging to propagate and take a while to reach a large size. The plants in our sale, although fairly small (ZZ plants can get huge over time) are at least one year old, if not two! We are excited to have over 60 available this year. Happy shopping!



Zamioculcas zamiifolia

KISS MY ASTERS

BY BETHANY TROY, PERENNIAL GARDEN MANAGER

Fall is one of my favorite times in the garden. The cold, crisp nights bring out tones and colors in plants that we have yet to see all year, all contrasting with one another and allowing us to hold onto what is left of the season. And there's something about fine-textured detail that I can't keep my eyes off of – which brings us to what I really want to talk to you about: asters.

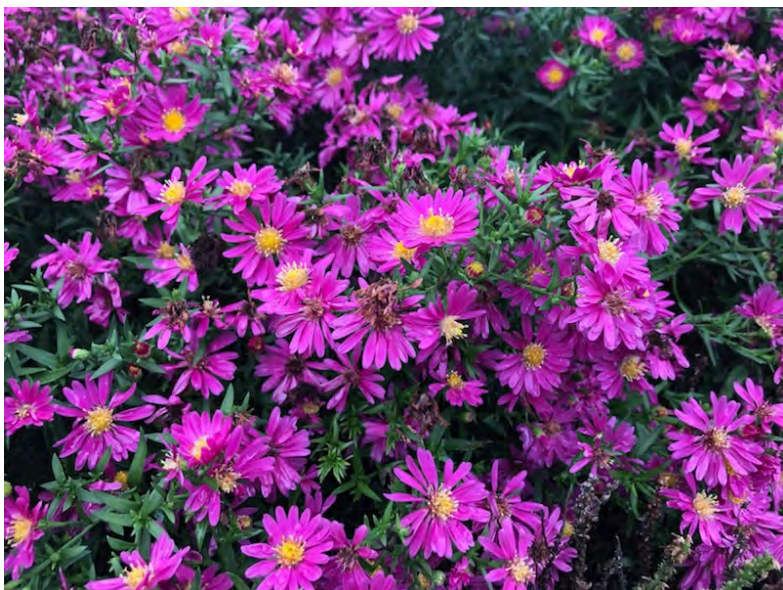
These unassuming plants are growing vigorously all year, just waiting for their time to shine in fall. They are perfect in every way, as both the last hurrah for flowers in the garden and as a pollen source for our beloved pollinators. This year, I have seen almost everything you could imagine feeding off of these during our last warm, sunny days – with monarchs all over them to boot! It's an added bonus that they are also native to North America, along with quite a few that are native to Michigan. While there are a number of different types of asters, here are a few of my favorites that you can find while strolling through the gardens.



Aster tataricus 'Jindai'

Aster tataricus 'Jindai'

This is a personal favorite. This plant will have you wondering all season, "What is this, and why is it here?" Low growing, wide foliage spreads on the ground without making much noise – then suddenly, in early to mid-October, flower stalks start shooting up to display a cluster of beautiful, lavender-purple flowers in a globular fashion.



Aster KICKIN 'Carmine Red'

Aster KICKIN' 'Carmine Red'

For those of us that love the impact of asters but don't have a lot of space, this tiny guy really packs a punch. This plant has really surprised me – it is covered with flowers and I have yet to pinch this one back. The deep magenta blooms contrast well with the changing colors in the fall landscape, and are complete with a golden button center. Looks particularly great paired with ornamental grasses.

Aster laevis 'Bluebird'

Walking through the gardens, you will find this covered in butterflies, moths, and bees as it is bursting with violet-blue flowers. Virtually pest-free, its foliage is quite attractive and provides a texture sure to impress your neighbors. A slightly larger aster with arching stems, this can be cut back in early July to help promote more compact growth. Plant this next to *Amsonia hubrichtii* for a colorful jaw-dropping show in the fall!

Be sure to add some Asters to your garden collection by coming to our spring plant sale – since I am obsessed, I will be sure to have a couple varieties available for you to purchase.

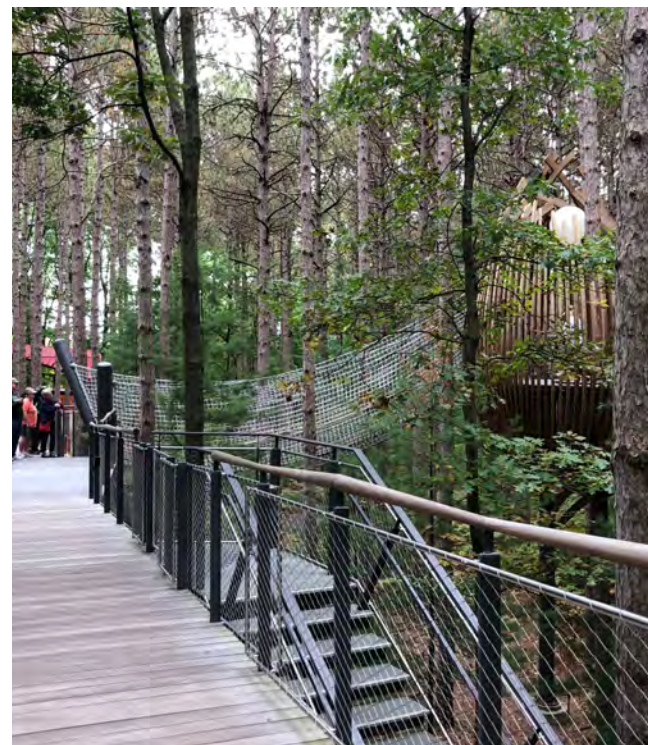
Happy fall!



Aster laevis 'Bluebird'

VOLUNTEER TRIP TO DOW GARDENS

BY BETHANY TROY, PERENNIAL GARDEN MANAGER





Design Contest!

Judith and George Mynsberge Master Gardener Idea Bed Deadline for submission - December 1, 2019

Michigan Master Gardeners are invited to submit a garden design for the Master Gardener Idea Bed located in the Michigan State University Horticulture Gardens. Masters Gardeners can work individually or in teams. If selected, your design will be planted spring of 2020 and grown for four years. Our last winning design was submitted by Sandra J. Lombard and is shown below in the summer of 2018.

Judith and George Mynsberge generously endowed this garden to give Master Gardener Volunteers an opportunity to share their creative garden design skills and ideas. This bed is round and about 35 feet in diameter with full sun.

Design criteria include path(s) for maintenance access into the bed, and the use of hardy perennials, shrubs and bulbs (no annuals). There is no specific irrigation or electricity in this area.

Judging will be by MSU horticulturists based on the following criteria:

1. Unique and suitable plant material and plant combinations
2. Viewable from all sides
3. Ease of maintenance
4. Use of at least one ornamental grass and blue foliage or flowers (as per request of donors)
5. Use of functional ideas that educate and perhaps inspire our visitors



All forms and designs must be submitted by postal mail or by email *no later than* **December 1, 2019**. The winner's design will be planted for the 2020 growing season and remain until 2024. Volunteer credit will be awarded for each design submitted.

Download forms from our web site: https://www.canr.msu.edu/hrt/our_gardens/master_gardener_idea_bed

Submit your design along with the Design Contest Registration Form to:

Bethany Troy
Master Gardener Idea Bed Design Contest
1066 Bogue Street
East Lansing, MI 48824

For further information, please contact Bethany Troy at troybeth@msu.edu or 517-355-0330.



**Master Gardener Idea Bed
Design Contest Registration Form
Michigan State University**

Individual Project Team Project

Date: _____

County MG Program: _____

Name(s): _____

Main Contact Name (if team project): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Email address is required in order to receive correspondence and status of the design contest.

Please submit Form along with Design to:

Bethany Troy - troybeth@msu.edu

**Bethany Troy
Master Gardener Idea Bed Design Contest
1066 Bogue Street
East Lansing, MI 48824**