



# GARDEN THYME

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



## LYNDSAY'S VINE

*By Lyndsay Ploehn, Agriculture & Natural Resource  
Extension Educator*

Welcome to the new Purdue Master Gardener newsletter, *Garden Thyme*. In this bi-monthly newsletter, you will gain knowledge about timely garden topics, get to know your fellow Master Gardeners, learn tried and true garden practices, and gain a collection of new recipes to try.

My hope is that our Master Gardeners will feel better connected, become more involved as volunteers, and will be advocates for our valuable program.

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To kick off our first newsletter, I would like to share the 2013 numbers I reported from our county to the state in comparison to the whole state Master Gardener program. This may give you a better understanding of why I stress reporting of volunteer and education hours. Our reporting year is from September 1 to August 1.

CATEGORY	PORTER COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS	PURDUE MASTER GARDENERS
Volunteer Hours	1,836	164,546
Hours in Dollars	\$39,593*	\$3.5 M*
Master Gardeners Trained	20	549
Active Master Gardeners	~260	3,238
Food Donated	1,000 lbs.	55,755 lbs.
MG Association College Scholarships Awarded	\$1,000	\$41,500

\*\$21.56 is the Indiana Volunteer Rate





## GARDENER'S GROUND

### Winterizing Tips

By Suzanna Tudor

It's that time of year again to put our "babies" to bed for the winter. For perkier blooms, greener lawns, and easier spring, winterizing is vital. Before the polar vortex attacks us again here are a few gardening-related chores that need tending:

1. Pull annuals, weeds, and invasives. Discard to prevent overwintering of insects/disease.
  2. Cut back and divide perennials.
  3. Empty containers, wash, and dry. Cover larger pots to waterproof.
  4. Dig up tender bulbs, Cannas, Dahlias, etc. after frost. Remove soil, dry, pack in dry medium, and store in cool, dry place.
  5. Plant spring bulbs any time September-December, as soil allows.
  6. Water new trees and perennials.
  7. Wrap trunks of new trees to prevent splitting or critter damage.
  8. Treat the lawn for broad leaf weeds and fertilize.
  9. Scrub down, dry, sharpen, oil, and put away tools.
  10. Remove water from hoses, recoil and store.
  11. Drain fuel tanks in mowers and/or rototillers. Change oil, inspect, sharpen blades, and clean.
  12. Mow as late as possible to prevent brown patches on high grass when deep snow accumulates.
  13. Cover/mulch garden beds with compost, leaves, wood chips, etc. for a protective layer and added nutrition.
- Have a good winter.

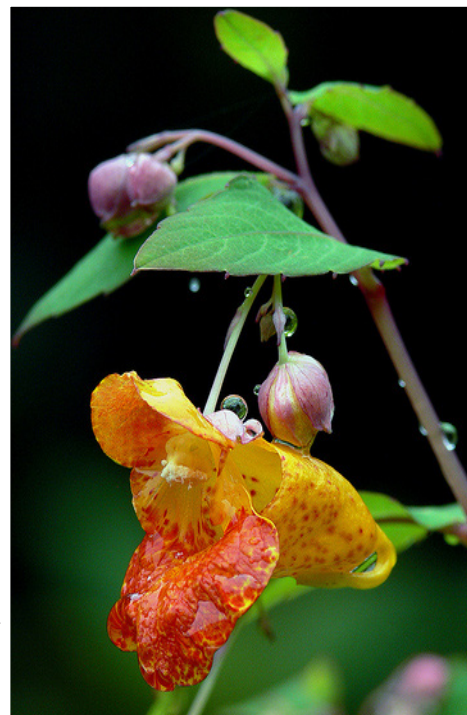


Photo credit: J.G. in S.F. / Foter / CC BY-NC-ND

## JUST NAME IT

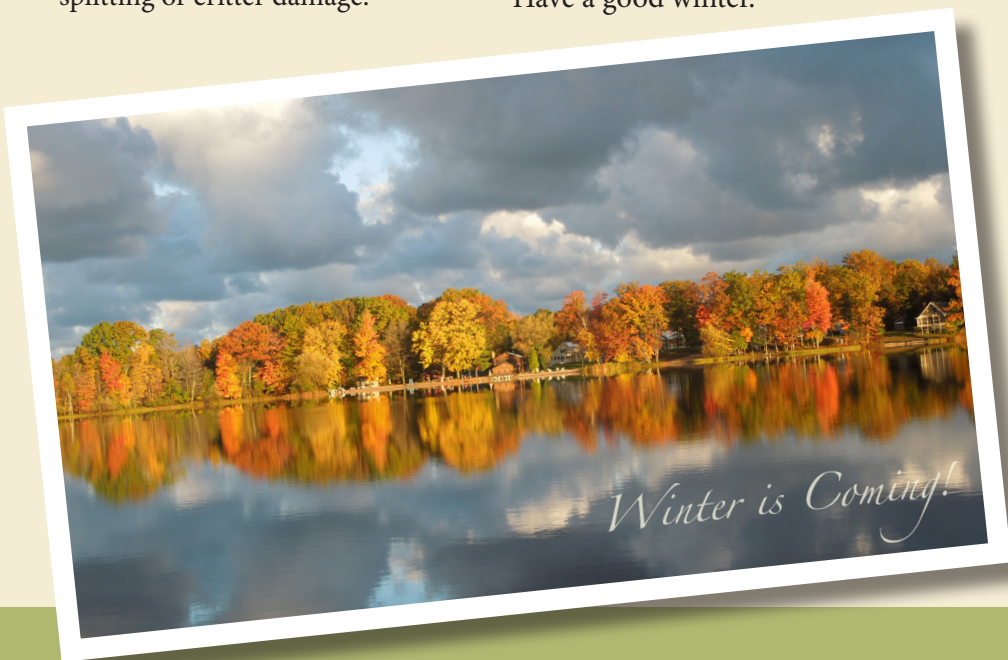
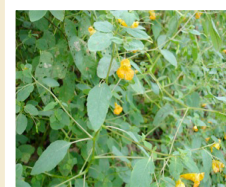
### Can You Identify This Indiana Native?

By Shelli Henry

This plant has been used for centuries as a natural preventative and treatment for poison ivy and poison oak. It is also a hummingbird magnet.

Can you identify this Indiana native?

Click on this picture to find out if you are correct.







## VOLUNTEER SPOT

### Save Seeds to Sow and Grow

By Kristine Sandrick



Master Gardeners (L-R) Sharon Fitzsimmons, Jackie Fenchak, Gloria Fancher and Judy Engle appreciate the need for cleaning and sharing seeds. Join them at one of the upcoming sessions.

If you are a springtime seed-sower you'll appreciate the work of Master Gardeners Judy Engle and Jackie Fenchak. The Seed & Bulb Committee co-chairs – along with other Master Gardeners – spend hours this time of year harvesting, sorting and packaging seeds.

Nearly 8,000 seed packets and a variety of bulbs are being prepared for the January 24, 2015 Gardening Show.

“The gardening show began as a seed and bulb exchange,” Judy said. “The practice started in pioneer days when folks gathered to save seeds for the coming season.”

Seed Savers Exchange ([seedsavers.org](http://seedsavers.org)) – a non-profit dedicated to saving and sharing heirloom seeds – says 90 percent of North America's historic fruit and vegetable varieties have vanished.

“We won't have heirloom seeds if we don't save them,” Jackie said. “Come join us. It's fun!”

### Seed Cleaning Dates

Tuesdays Oct. 7 and Nov. 4, 1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Westchester Library Service Center  
100 W. Indiana, Chesterton (926-7696)

Sat. Oct. 25 and Fri. Nov. 21, 9 a.m. – noon  
Valparaiso Library, Room A  
103 E. Jefferson, Valparaiso (462-0524)

## FROM MY GARDEN

### A Perfect Plant for the Season

By Beverly Thevenin

Gardeners are fickle beings, easily distracted by the current posy strutting its stuff. While the hellebores revive me with their late-winter blossoms and the arching, bright red blooms of my *Crocsmia* demand my attention mid-summer, I think the *Ageratina altissima* ‘Chocolate’, or chocolate Joe Pye weed, is a standout in my garden today.

A winter-hardy native, it is one of the last hurrahs of the garden, patiently waiting to bloom until mid-September. A late frost will give the plant enough time to bloom in all its glory, covering itself with white, airy inflorescences



while all around it daylilies and daisies languish, waiting to be put out of their misery. Butterflies are reported to love this plant, but by bloom time most of the butterflies are gone in our zone. With its dark green and purple foliage on 3'- 4' sturdy stems and a 3' spread, it is a stand out in the garden all year, particularly when situated near plants with chartreuse or golden foliage for contrast.





## ReCiBEEs From Our Gardeners



## Curried Pumpkin Soup

This timely Fall soup is from the kitchen of Master Gardener Maureen Phillips. Although the recipe is from The Complete Book of Soups and Stews by Bernard Clayton, Jr., Mr. Clayton originally got the recipe from Singapore Airlines. "It's wonderful for Thanksgiving and it freezes well for the winter," said Maureen.

**Serves 6**

### Ingredients

- 4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) butter
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 garlic clove, mashed and diced
- 2 cups pumpkin puree, freshly made or canned (or butternut squash)
- 4 cups chicken stock
- 1 bay leaf
- Pinch sugar
- 1/3 teaspoon or more curry powder
- Pinch nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, if needed
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper, freshly ground
- 2 cups light cream
- 1/3 cup toasted coconut, to garnish

### Directions

Melt butter in a medium (3-quart) saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and garlic. Cover and cook until soft and translucent, about 8 minutes.

Add pumpkin puree and stock. Stir well to mix. Add bay leaf, sugar, curry powder and nutmeg. Bring to a boil, lower to simmer and cook for 30 minutes. While soup is cooking, taste for seasoning. Add salt, if needed, and pepper.

Remove from heat, stir in cream. Reheat, but do not allow to boil. Serve in heated bowls garnished with coconut.

## ◀ FEATURED PLANT (Continued From Page 3)

Although some have reported it as a problematic reseeder, mine has never reseeded. A plant that can stand up to the storms of summer without flopping, suffers no insect damage, requires no maintenance except cutting back in the fall, blooms late to hold onto summer a little longer, and has "chocolate" in its name is a winner in my garden.

If you go searching for this plant, you might find it listed as *Eupatorium rugosum* 'Chocolate'. However, the *Eupatorium* genus has been split up in recent years and the plant is now properly classified as *Ageratina altissima* 'Chocolate'.





## MEET A MASTER GARDENER

### Master Gardener - Kristine Sandrick

By Marcia Carson

**When and why did you take the MG class?** I took the class in 2014 to expand my knowledge beyond trial and error! The class gave me more resources, more technical information. The class made me aware of the right plant for the right place. It's also connected me with some wonderful gardeners.

**Do you have a favorite plant?** I do not have a favorite plant – I'm happy when I plant something that flourishes. Last fall I reclaimed a bed that had "naturalized" and planted things I found at the end of the season – clematis, dwarf sun flowers, balloon flowers and they've done well. Perhaps like many gardeners, I'm happy with less fussy plants.

#### How have you been involved in gardening as a MG?

I have so much to learn as a Master Gardener intern. I'm working on the Extension Office newsletter, just started attending monthly meetings and will be going to a wild flower workshop to learn about using native plants.

**Do you have any gardening projects planned for the near future?** Living in Chicago for many years, I used flowers to brighten up roof-top decks and grew some herbs. That practice continues although we put a "green roof" on a new addition and plan to use the space to grow salad veggies.

We live in the dunes and the hillside behind our house is a jungle. This week I'm clearing brambles and other weeds that are choking lilac bushes. I'm beginning to envision

wildflowers and other natives filling in that void – working with nature to create a beautiful, peaceful space.



## THE TOOL SHED

### Winterizing Your Garden Tools

By Shelli Henry

It's the end of another gardening season and a perfect time to winterize your garden tools.

A little prep now will have you ready to go when spring arrives. Here are some tips on how to keep your tools in great shape:

Remove all dried or caked-on dirt with a wire brush, rinse and dry thoroughly. (Soak especially dirty tools in water first.)

Sharpen dull tools using a whetstone or file. Working at a 45 degree angle, start at the outer edge and move toward the center.

Sand off any rust spots with fine sandpaper or steel wool, and coat the metal with vegetable oil.

Wipe a light coating of linseed oil or paste wax on wooden handle to preserve them and prevent cracking or splitting.

Store hand trowels and other small tools in a bucket of sand soaked in oil to further deter rust.

Good tools are expensive. Take good care of them and they will contribute to many years of productive gardening. Do you have duplicate or gently used tools that need a new home? Consider donating them to the Porter County Master Gardeners Association. For more information regarding tool donation contact Terry Luchene at [terryluchene@gmail.com](mailto:terryluchene@gmail.com).







## GARDEN WANDERER

### Longwood Gardens

By Lyndsay Ploehn,  
*Agriculture & Natural Resource Extension Educator*

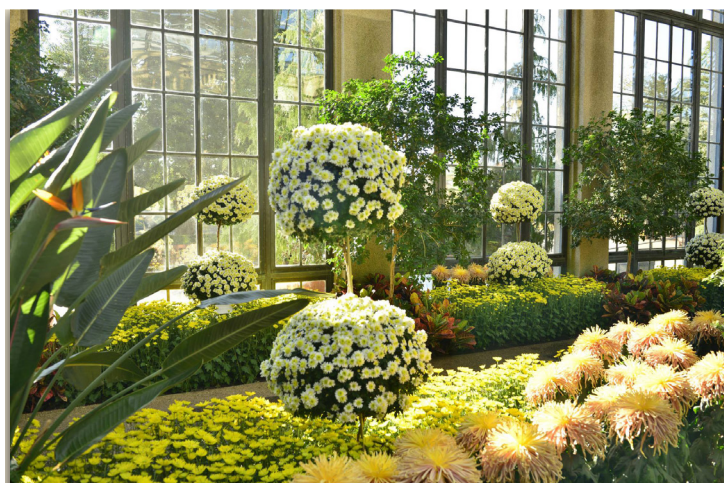
**L**ongwood Gardens is one of the world's premier horticulture display gardens. Located in the heart of the Brandywine Valley, just 30 miles west of Philadelphia, Pa., this DuPont estate will inspire you to dream big. October is the month when most gardens start senescing for the winter, but at Longwood the fall and winter months are when the garden comes alive.

October 25 through November 23 is the time to experience Longwood's best expression of the art of horticulture during Chrysanthemum Festival which showcases the Asian tradition of cultivating chrysanthemums into artistic shapes. Explore the four-acre Conservatory and discover more than 80,000 chrysanthemum blooms trained into amazing forms. The highlight of the display is the [Thousand Bloom Mum](#), featuring more than 1,300 perfectly arranged flowers—the largest of its kind grown outside of Asia.

But the excitement doesn't stop there. If you want to witness a true horticulture phenomenon, you should visit at the end of the Chrysanthemum Festival which always falls around Thanksgiving. On November 23, you can explore the thousands of perfectly-formed chrysanthemums and then return to the gardens on November 26, and the gardens have transformed to [Christmas!](#)

The Conservatory transforms overnight with hundreds of workers diligently working through the night. When the Christmas lights come on, giant trees glow, fountains display colorful sprays, poinsettias, narcissus, evergreens, and winterberries delight your senses. You will leave Longwood inspired and transformed! This 83-acre garden is a horticulture marvel that you have to see to believe. I was an intern at Longwood Gardens in the Conservatory and got to be involved in this unique experience. If you ever want to take a trip to visit there, I also have lots of helpful tips and suggestions for other great gardens to see in the area. Please feel free to contact me or just drop by my office to chat.

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#### WORKING/EDUCATIONAL SEED CLEANING MEETINGS

Westchester Library Service Center  
100 W. Indiana, Chesterton, IN (926-7696)  
Tuesday, October 7 and Tuesday, November 4, 1:30p – 4:30p  
and  
Valparaiso Library, Room A  
103 E. Jefferson, Valparaiso, IN (462-0524)  
Saturday, October 25 and Friday, November 21, 9a – 12p

#### 2015 PURDUE MASTER GARDENER STATE CONF.

June 4-6, 2015  
For information / mailing list, email: [mgconf2015@twc.com](mailto:mgconf2015@twc.com)

#### INVASIVE SPECIES FIELD DAY

Northern Ind. Cooperative Invasive Management  
Spicer Lake Nature Preserve  
50840 County Line Road, New Carlisle, IN  
Saturday, October 11, 9a – 12p EST  
<http://www.sjcparks.org/spicer.html>  
and  
The Res  
13950 Scout Lane, Mishawaka, IN  
Saturday, October 25, 9a – 12p EST  
James Potthoff 219-843-4827 / [jpotthoff@dnr.in.gov](mailto:jpotthoff@dnr.in.gov)  
or Danny Van Zant 574-259-1850 / [resrangers@att.net](mailto:resrangers@att.net)