



WOOD COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

Wood County WI

November 2023

President's Message November 2023



Harvest

...the time we collect the fruits of all our hard work during the growing season and tuck it away to sustain us in the future...but also enjoy and give thanks for what we have accomplished. Our Master Gardening year is winding down and I took a few minutes to review all our newsletters since January to get a snapshot of our activities and accomplishments this year. It seems we've left the pandemic behind and we've done and accomplished a lot!

- We learned a lot: Pruning, winter sowing, Organic Community Farming, Keystone Plants, Bonsai, Dr Death!
- We taught a lot: Garden Guru & Fair Booth, Ask A Master Gardener, Diagnostic Team inquiries, meeting/teaching the public at our plant sales and projects.
- We worked hard on funding: Spring & Fall Plant sales...and kickoff of Garden Walk 2024.
- We had fun: Road Trip to one of our favorite greenhouses & Joyce's garden, Tea & Tulips, the summer picnic, craft making day at Lil's.

So many thanks are due to those who helped make all this happen. Let's sit back, enjoy, and give thanks for all our blessings. Happy Thanksgiving!

Chris

November Meeting Information p. 2

September Meeting Minutes p. 3

October Meeting Minutes p. 4

Educ Offerings for C E p. 5

Plant Sale Buzz p. 6

Japanese Beetles Won't Eat ... p. 6

Calendar Listings p. 7

PDDC article "Apple Diseases" p.8-10

October Garden Guide p.11

November Program Information

Looking Back; Moving Forward!

With

WCMGV Officers

Alexander House

1131 Wisconsin River Drive, Port Edwards

6 to 9 PM, Tuesday, November 14, 2023

(This membership meeting will most likely be available via Zoom; we are unsure if Zoom can capture our program activities. We are working on it. Stay tuned for further information via Chris Grimes.)

2023 found WCMGV somewhat at a crossroads. We were first free from the covid scare and inactivity of the past; we had a new leadership team working with an experienced BOD; we had to learn to function without the regular direction of our horticulture advisor; we had a full slate of activities through the MG season; our membership stabilized to around 30 with several interns moving toward certification. It is a good time to stop and look at our past year and give you, as members a chance to evaluate and answer some important questions. What are you looking for being in WCMGV? What did we do well? What could we do better? What education programs at our monthly meetings are you looking for? What left an impact on you from your participation in WCMGV? Karleen and Judy will lead the conversations that will give the BOD guidance for 2024.

Venue Change

Lil Schotten, Judy Miller and Cathy Schutz have arranged for us to enjoy our final 2023 meeting at the historic Alexander House in Port Edwards. The change from our usual library site allows some extra time for us to spend together socially. The planning committee asks each member to bring a favorite sweet or savory snack to share. Coffee and punch as well as serving dishes and utensils will be provided.

Directions (for Marshfield Drivers)

Take Grand Avenue (73) into Wisconsin Rapids to the intersection of the railroad tracks and the expressway around town. Cross the railroad tracks and turn right onto the expressway. Just before the bridge over the Wisconsin River, turn right onto 2nd Avenue (WI 54-73). At the roundabout, take the 3rd exit onto WI 73 which is also Wisconsin River Drive. When you arrive at the Alexander House, turn onto Jackson Avenue to access parking.

It is recommended that all members consider car-pooling as parking is somewhat limited.



Our November 14th Master Gardener meeting will be a wonderful time to look back and **give thanks** for all that **WE** have accomplished as gardeners and friends together in 2023. Your planning committee has a couple fun activities planned in addition to honoring members and establishing goals for next year.

*We look forward to seeing **EVERYONE** there !!!*

September Meeting Minutes as revised

Wood County Master Gardener Volunteer Assoc. General Membership Meeting

September 26, 2023 5:30 pm

Marshfield Library

Program: Keystone Plants - Dr. Paul Whitaker of UWSP - Wausau Total Present: 12

Business Meeting: (Chris Grimes) Called to order 6:45

Secretary's Report: (J. Miller) Review of minutes from August 15, 2023. without additions or corrections. Minutes will be put on file.

Treasurer's Report : (Marx) Chris presented in the absence of Famia. Reviewed and put on file

WIMGA: (Mickey Erickson) Members' meeting will be coming up in October to approve another change to WIMGA bylaws. No change in online training:

September 27, 6:30 pm Matt Wallrath, Wisconsin First Detector Network Coordinator Invasive Species

October 26, 6:30 pm Dr. Susan Carpenter, Restoring Native Prairie Stream & Savanna: Restoration in Progress

January 16, 2024 Craig LeHoullier, Bring Your Garden to the Sun: All About Container and Straw Bale Gardening

Wood County Horticulture Report: (Chris for Janel) Janel encourages current members to audit a class or to come share their experiences with trainees. Janel has made the syllabus for class topics available. Let Janel know if you are interested. There are currently 16 participants taking Janel's class. They are not obligated to become Master Gardeners. They can decide if they want to join MG or not.

Old Business:

Garden Walk 2024 Team: (Lil written report) The Team is planning Raffle Baskets and making plant labels to be used in Garden Walk gardens next summer. More information to follow in monthly newsletters. Lil is gathering information for expenses associated with the walk to create a budget request. Garden Walk Team meetings will start after members respond to a poll for best meeting dates/times to tackle our work. It's not too late to join us! Notify Lil or Chris Grimes, President, if you'd like to be part of the planning.

Fall Plant Sale Report: (Jill) Jill provided a very detailed report from the plant sale. She commented on the great team effort to cover all the necessary tasks. The sale brought in 31% more than last year. Total is yet to be determined with a few final plant sales still pending. Jill's proposals will be discussed at a later time.

New Business:

Bylaws Revision: (Chris) M/S/P (Shelby & Audrey) to accept the recommended Bylaw changes by the Board. They will be filed.

Nominating Committee: (Karleen & Bea) The 2 Directors currently at the end of their terms will accept the nomination for another term, as will Chris for President, and Judy for Secretary. Karleen's term limit for Vice President is up. We are seeking a new VP.

Annual Membership Dues: Further discussion is needed to finalize the Membership Dues form.

Social Event for November meeting: The Nov.14 meeting is at 6:00 PM at the Alexander House in Port Edwards. More info to follow.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30. M/S/P to adjourn – Shelby/Donna

Next meeting: Tuesday, October 24 at 5:30pm Marshfield Library (second floor). Bob Cline: Bonsai

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy Miller, Secretary

October Meeting Minutes

Wood County Master Gardener Volunteer Assoc. General Membership Meeting October 24, 2023 5:30 pm Marshfield Library

Program: Bonsai Plants – Bob Cline

Total Present: 12

Business Meeting: (VP Karleen Remington) Called to order 6:34

Secretary's Report: (J. Miller) Review of minutes from September 26, 2023 will be filed as printed.

Treasurer's Report : (Karleen presented in Famia's absence) Report put on file as printed.

WIMGA: (Mickey Erickson) Members' meeting was held on October 18. Vacancies for WIMGA BOA members remain available. Board members voted to approve the WIMGA bylaws as presented. An online presentation is offered tomorrow evening. It will be recorded and available to view for Continuing Ed Hours.

October 26, 6:30 pm Dr. Susan Carpenter, Restoring Native Prairie Stream & Savanna: Restoration in Progress

No changes to other upcoming training:

January 16, 2024 Craig LeHoullier, Bring Your Garden to the Sun: All About Container and Straw Bale Gardening

Old Business:

Fall Plant Sale Report: (Jill) The sale brought in 31% more than last year. A few final bills have been paid. The final total is \$3715.00.

Nominating Committee: (Karleen & Bea) We need to recruit a candidate for VP.

New Business:

Membership Dues: Annual Membership Dues forms were handed out. The remaining forms will be mailed to members not present. Forms and dues must be sent to Famia no later than Nov. 15, 2023.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:20. M/S/P to adjourn – Shelby/Barb

Next meeting: Tuesday, November 14, 6:00 PM

Alexander House – Port Edwards

Elections! AWARDS NIGHT!

Program: Looking Back; Moving Forward

Social Event and Refreshments!

Respectfully Submitted, Judy Miller,

Education Opportunities for C. E. Hours

UW Extension Horticulture

Debunking Houseplant Myths **Date/Time:** October 31, 12:00 p.m.

Description: It can be hard to separate fact from fiction, especially when it comes to plant care and pest prevention. Join us to discuss common misconceptions about your indoor plant care and learn the correct strategies to keep your indoor greenery thriving and healthy.

Adaptive Gardening Tools: What to think about for success next season Nov. 9, 12:00 p.m.

Description: Here are some ideas of gardening tools that will make your life in the garden easier and extend your time outside enjoying the weather. By using adaptive gardening tools you can care for your plants while reducing the chance of injury.

Growing *Adenium* (Desert Rose) – The Flamboyant Succulent November 14, 12:00 p.m.

Description: *Adeniums*, or “Desert Roses,” are popular houseplants because of their structurally interesting shapes and abundance of flowers available in a diversity of colors. But, as succulents, they have special cultural requirements for care and maintenance. Join us to learn how you can successfully grow these plants and keep them thriving at home!

To register for any of the above three free webinars, go to [Webinars for WI Gardeners – Wisconsin Horticulture](#)

The Extension Horticulture website is a treasure trove of educational articles, videos, webinars and courses. You can get on the Horticulture email list to be notified of educational opportunities at: [Stay informed about Extension gardening learning opportunities!](#)

From the Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic

Diseases of Evergreens November 15, 2023 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Learn about common diseases that can adversely affect the evergreens around your home. This presentation will include information on how to identify the diseases, as well as information on how to manage them

To register:

[2023 PDDC Monthly Disease Talk Registration Form | Plant Disease Diagnostics Clinic \(wisc.edu\)](#)

Ten Cool Diseases You Can Learn to Love (and Identify by Eye) DEC. 13, 2023, 6:30 – 8:30PM

Learn about ten fascinating plant diseases with such distinctive signs and symptoms that you can identify them by eye. This presentation will cover the biology of the organisms that cause these diseases and tidbits of disease control information as well. Registration same as above.

Garden Guru November 20 at 6pm in person at the Marshfield Public Library or on Zoom

Topic is “**Caring for Your Holiday Plants**”. To enter the online You Tube presentation, go to Everett Roehl Memorial Public Library web page and click on Adults, then Programs, scroll down to Garden Guru and click on “Online”. That will take you to the You Tube location of the program. Or use this URL : <https://www.youtube.com/@ermpllibrary2715>

Plant Sale Buzz



Now is an excellent time to get out in your gardens and continue to look for those dried materials for our dried arrangements for the fall plant sale.

While you are out there, check for seed pods developing on late summer and fall flowering plants. Collect, dry and label for winter sowing this winter.

Speaking of winter sowing, start collecting milk jugs or other tall bottles in clear or translucent plastic (not green) for use for winter sowing. Take advantage of fall end-of-season sales to pick up potting soil and other supplies.

Do you have any annual plants that you brought inside or covered from frost? Take cuttings from them to propagate for new plants over the winter and to sell at the spring plant sale.

When you have finished your outside work, think about propagating some houseplants, growing fairy gardens, or terrariums for future sales.

When lifting summer bulbs, check to see if any have multiplied or produced offshoots that could be cleaned well, and stored for the spring sale.

For more information on these topics, see our past newsletters or ask plant sale committee persons.

Our members are getting the idea that great plant sales depend on year round planning and preparation! Because of that, we had great sales this year!

Japanese Beetles Do Not Like... by Ann Rozner

I am developing a list of plants that Japanese Beetles do not tend to eat. Can everyone help me out? Please send me the names of plants that you currently grow, that the beetles do not seem to bother. I am looking for plants that you actually grow in your gardens and not a list that is on the internet, book or other resource. I want first hand experience in Central Wisconsin. Do not include vegetables. It is to include shrubs, trees and flowers that are perennials and annuals. Typically, they do not devour many native species except examples such as grapes and raspberries. An example is: White Geraniums. The beetles do not seem to like the whites but do like the other colors.

Usually in September, the Japanese Beetles are finishing their cycle above ground and grasshoppers take over. Just one grasshopper can damage a potted annual that may be decorating an entry way or used as an accent plant amongst a perennial bed. Consider the months of June, July and August.

These incredible yet beautiful creatures do not seem to have enough predators to regulate their population. We need to tolerate and live with Japanese Beetle infestations. A well developed list can be used as an effective educational tool when this topic comes up in any of our gardening events.

Please email your list to Ann

or the Wood County Master Gardeners at <https://wood-county-master-gardeners.org/>

Calendar of Events

November 14 Membership Meeting 6pm Alexander House

November 20 Garden Guru 6pm Mfld Library or You Tube

January 15 Garden Guru 6pm Homegrown National Parks

January 16 WIMGA Educational Program

Reminder: If you know of a WCMGV member who should be remembered in case of illness, hospitalization, death of a family member, etc. be sure to contact Bea Kohl so she can send a card and/or note on behalf of our organization. It takes all of us to keep track of how well our members are doing and whether anyone needs a little bit of our thoughtfulness. Bea's phone number is 715-423-8908

Note from the Editor

I need the articles for the newsletter at least two days before the First of the month. When an article is submitted at the last minute, it means the pages have to be reworked and often articles need to be juggled around to make it all fit and still look nice and be readable. Please make every attempt to get articles turned in within a day or two of Chris' reminder on the 25th of every month. Your editor thanks you for your consideration!



Join our Communication Team!

Facebook Co-administrator Wanted

For those of you on Facebook...we're looking for another person to help administer the WCMGV Facebook page. It's a digital age and our page is an important resource for accomplishing our mission to educate and to engage with the public. We use it to promote our activities and fundraisers and feature educational topics of interest to Central Wisconsin gardeners. Administrators respond to inquiries from the public sent to our page, post promotional notices about our meetings and fundraisers, and post topical educational features. It's easy and does not require much of a time commitment, so it's a great way to volunteer to get our message out there. Training provided! Call Chris Grimes with questions.

October 2023: Poison Apples for the Halloween Season



October is National Apple Month and also host to my favorite holiday of the year, Halloween. (Does the latter really surprise you given my moniker, Dr. Death?) So, in honor of both events, I decided that for this month's web article, I'd talk a bit about diseases that can adversely affect apple fruits and make them less than optimal for use in making pies and seasonal treats like caramel apples. The pathogens involved in these diseases do not produce compounds toxic to humans, so technically the infected apples are not poison per se. However, the damage these pathogens cause often makes apple fruits unusable.

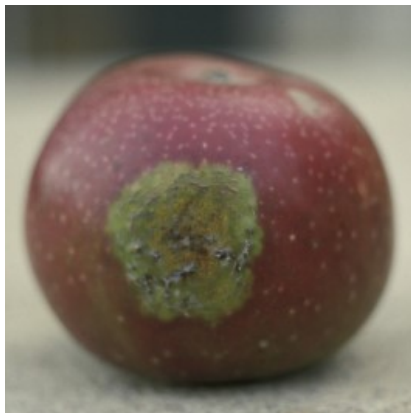
Apple Scab

(Photo courtesy of UW-Madison PDDC)

This disease is the most common that I see causing issues on apple fruits. The causal fungus (*Venturia inaequalis*) commonly infects apples leaves, often leading to defoliation in susceptible apple varieties. Once leaf infections occur, the fungus can eventually infect fruits leading to symptoms that range from blackish surface blemishes to fruit growth distortions (if infections occur early in fruit development). Of the apple fruit diseases, apple scab is the most cosmetic in my mind. Fruits are often usable if peeled. The downside to the disease is that consumers expect perfect, perfect fruit and are not accepting of fruits with apple scab lesions. Also, scab-blemished fruits typically do not store as well as unblemished fruits. For this reason, commercial apple growers spend a lot of time, effort, and money spraying apple trees with fungicides to prevent this disease.



Gymnosporangium Rusts



(Photo courtesy of Mary Ann Hansen, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Bugwood.org) The fungi involved in these diseases (which include cedar-apple rust, cedar-hawthorn rust, and cedar-quince rust) must infect both woody rosaceous plants (most commonly, apples and hawthorns), and junipers to complete their life cycles. Red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) is a particularly susceptible juniper host. I most commonly see Gymnosporangium rust symptoms on leaves, where bright yellow to orange spots (about the size of a dime or nickel) form. But, fruit infections on hawthorn (where you will see spiny, salmon-colored fruit) are also very common. I have seen fewer apple fruit infections, but they do occur, and the lesions tend to have a spiny appearance. Infected fruits are often frightening and fascinating at the same time.

Fire Blight

2023 was a banner year for fire blight in my estimation. I diagnosed more fire blight this year than any other year in my 25 years at the PDDC. The bacterium that causes the disease (*Erwinia amylovora*) commonly gains entry into trees through flowers. Honeybees pick up the bacterium as they feed on oozing sap from infected branches. The bees then drop the pathogen off as they pollinate. *Erwinia amylovora* can rapidly colonize branches leading to significant dieback, and even

tree death. Interestingly this year, I received samples of apple fruits (not full developed, but well on their way) with blotchy, rotted areas that were quite sticky. These areas tested positive for *Erwinia amylovora*. This was a first for me. I had never seen fireblight on apple fruits before. (Photo courtesy of University of Georgia Plant Pathology, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org)



Black Rot



(Photo courtesy of University of Georgia Plant Pathology, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org)

I don't see this fungal fruit disease often, but I commonly see the pathogen involved (a *Sphaeropsis* species) cause cankers and dieback on apple branches. Often, when clients think they have a fire blight problem, the real problem is the canker phase of black rot. The black rot pathogen also causes frog-eye leaf spot on apple leaves. Interestingly, the pathogen does not sporulate well on leaves, but it sporulates profusely on branches and fruits. Fruit symptoms are often large, roughly circular, dark areas of softened tissue. If you look closely within the decayed tissue, you may notice a series of concentric rings showing how the fungus has colonized the fruit. You may also notice tiny, pimple-like structures embedded in the rotten tissue. These are the fruiting bodies (i.e., reproductive structures) of the pathogen, filled with relatively large, oblong, brown spores.

Bitter Rot

(Photo courtesy of University of Georgia Plant Pathology, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org)

Bitter rot is caused by fungi in the genus *Colletotrichum* (typically *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides* or *Colletotrichum acutatum*). This genus contains many fungi that cause anthracnose leaf diseases. On apple, the bitter rot pathogens are primarily fruit pathogens (leaf symptoms are only rarely observed), leading to symptoms that look somewhat similar to those observed with black rot. Bitter rot lesions are often large, roughly circular, and somewhat tannish to brown in color. Concentric rings are typically quite obvious with the diseased tissue, and pimple-like fruiting bodies abound. Individual spores of the bitter rot pathogens are smaller than those of the black rot pathogen, oblong and colorless. En masse on the surfaces of fruits however, these spores can have a pink, salmon, or orange color.



Management of apple fruit diseases varies from disease to disease, but in general involves:

Cleaning up leaf debris and rotted fruits

Removal of these materials eliminates overwintering sites for many of the disease-causing organisms discussed above. Leaf debris removal is particularly important for management of apple scab, but not particularly important for the Gymnosporangium rusts (because the spores that infect apple trees come from junipers). Dispose of leaf and fruit debris by burning (where allowed), burying, or hot composting.

Pruning routinely

Pruning removes infected branches that can serve as a source of pathogens (e.g, those that cause

fire blight, black rot, and bitter rot). In addition, routine pruning of a healthy tree opens the canopy and promotes drier conditions that are less favorable for infections to occur. For branches with probable fungal infections, pruning approximately four to six below obviously dead tissue will likely be adequate to remove pathogens. If fire blight is of concern however, more aggressive pruning, 12 inches below obviously diseased branch tissue, is needed. Be sure to prune only when it is dry, and be sure to disinfect your pruning tools between cuts by dipping them in bleach diluted to a final concentration of 0.5% sodium hypochlorite (the active ingredient) or (even better) 70% alcohol (e.g., rubbing alcohol). Spray disinfectants can be used as a source of alcohol as well. Just be sure to check the ingredient list of the disinfectant that you select to make sure it contains roughly 70% alcohol. If you use bleach, be sure to thoroughly rinse and oil tools after you are done pruning to prevent rusting that can be caused by bleach use. Dispose of branches by burning (where allowed) or burying them.

Eliminating alternate hosts

This technique is most important for managing *Gymnosporangium* rusts. Removing junipers near apple trees will help break the life cycle of *Gymnosporangium* fungi and substantially reduce or even eliminate these rust diseases. Unfortunately removing junipers may not be practical. I have seen some recommendations for commercial apple producers that advise removing junipers within a two mile radius of apple producing areas! This would not be possible in a home gardening setting. For apple scab, removing susceptible crabapple trees may be helpful in controlling scab on fruit bearing trees by eliminating a potential source of fungal spores.

Planting resistant varieties

When buying new apple trees, I always recommend that home fruit growers select varieties that have resistance to both apple scab and fire blight. These two diseases are typically the most problematic for home gardeners.

Using fungicide treatments

I recommend this option only as a last resort and only if you have had your apple disease problems formally diagnosed. By knowing which apple diseases you commonly encounter, you can develop a fungicide treatment regime tailored to your specific situation.

Now that I've spent the afternoon writing about apple fruit diseases, my tummy is rumbling. It's time for me to track down a caramel apple. As always, if you have questions about plant diseases, don't hesitate to contact me at pddc@wisc.edu or (608) 262-2863. Enjoy the last colorful days of autumn, everyone!



November Garden Guide

Taken from Portage County WI Master Gardener website and Melinda Myers website

- Finish planting spring bulbs.
- Prepare new perennial beds for spring planting. Soil will be conditioned over winter.
- With sunny conditions, paper-white narcissus planted indoors about mid November will bloom for Christmas.
- After ground freezes, mulch azaleas and rhododendrons with chopped oak leaves or pine needles. Perennial beds should also be mulched with coarse material such as marsh hay.
- Do not smother self-sowing annual beds with heavy mulch.
- Reduce watering and feeding houseplants as lower light conditions of winter approach.
- Test soil if you haven't done so recently.
- Clean window boxes and outdoor planters, fill with greens and berries or other seasonal display.
- Mulch carrots, parsnips and leeks with a foot of straw or marsh hay for winter digging. Mark rows with stakes.
- Mulch asparagus bed with chopped leaves or straw to protect crowns from frost.
- Inventory, clean, repair and coat the metal parts of garden tools with vegetable oil before storing.
- Drain gasoline from tiller.
- Harvest the last of the hardy vegetables, such as Chinese cabbage, Brussels sprouts and kale. These will continue to produce until a frost below 25 degrees F.
- Harvest vegetables to be stored indoors before ground freezes.
- Heavily water trees and shrubs before ground freezes. This helps prevent winter burn on evergreens.
- Cut back fall blooming hydrangeas, leaving one or two pairs of buds on each flower stem.
- Wrap the trunks of young shade trees and fruit trees to protect them from animal damage and sunscald.
- Make one last lawn mowing, setting blade one-half inch lower than usual. Drain gas from mowers.
- Cut to the ground any summer bearing raspberry or blackberry canes that have fruited this year.
- Dormant pruning of black, yellow and purple raspberries is done by shortening all lateral branches to 15 inches.
- Prune grapevines.
- Mulch strawberries and bramble fruits after the ground has frozen, but before the temperature falls below 15 degrees (usually late November.) Apply 2-4 inches of straw or marsh hay.



2023 WCMGV BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President—Chris Grimes

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Vice President—Karleen Remington

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Wood County Extension Horticultural Agent

Janell Wehr janell.wehr@wisc.edu

The Wood County Master Gardener Association is a non-profit organization with a mission to educate and share information with its members and the community alike. In addition, it is our charge to promote the UW Extension from which we are founded. We are a diverse group interested in the latest research-based horticultural information.

Future Article Submissions

Please send items for inclusion in the newsletter by the 25th of the previous month to: streiffonclay@tds.net

Wisconsin Master Gardener Website:

<https://mastergardener.extension.wisc.edu/>

Wood County Extension Website:

<https://wood.extension.wisc.edu/>

Wood County Master Gardener Association Website:

<https://wood-county-master-gardeners.org/>

WIMGA Website:
<https://www.wimga.org>

Plant Sale Reminders

- **A big THANK YOU to all the members who grew plants, collected materials for dried arrangements, helped set up, worked the sale days, helped with take down, and are planning for next year already.**
- **Now is the time to start those indoor plants for the next sale.**
- **Continue to collect material for dried arrangements for next year.**
- **Get ready to winter sow in a month or two.**
- **Set aside those garden treasures when cleaning up this fall.**
- **Collect seeds and dry for next year.**
- **Store bulbs for the winter.**