



WISCONSIN MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION  
Serving its members since 1992

November 2024

# WIMGA

**WIMGA Vision** - The Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association is the collective voice for local Master Gardener Associations and individual members in active support for their horticultural projects and services; build networks to enhance outreach, share ideas and promote projects.

## Fall is Upon Us

Marilyn Gorham, St Croix Valley MG

Once again, as I prepare my garden beds for winter, I reflect on what has happened this past year and look to what is coming in 2025. This gardening season was one of the most challenging I have ever experienced. Here in Western Wisconsin heavy rain in spring and summer encouraged the slugs and earwigs to devour not only my vegetable plants but the fruit they were trying to bear. Plant diseases of all types were in abundance during that wet period. Suddenly, by September, this area moved into drought, experiencing the driest September and, as of mid-month, October on record. Trying to do any fall planting is next to impossible and watering is essential for mere survival of my perennials and shrubs. I am wondering how many of my trees, shrubs and perennials will not make it, but that is the challenge of gardening. Early 2025 will begin with the removal of several trees damaged by heavy winds in 2024 along with a very large elm that finally succumbed to Dutch Elm disease. Winter will be a good time to research current recommended replacements.



This past year was another busy one for WIMGA. We will look back at the year at the Annual Meeting on January 13th starting at 6:30 pm on Zoom. Doug Tallamy, whose book, *Nature's Best Hope*, many of you have read, is our featured speaker. This meeting is my last official duty as WIMGA President, and you will meet our new President. I hope you will join us.

More about Doug Tallamy and our 2025 Continuing Education programming can be found on the next page. An exciting program schedule is ahead in 2025.

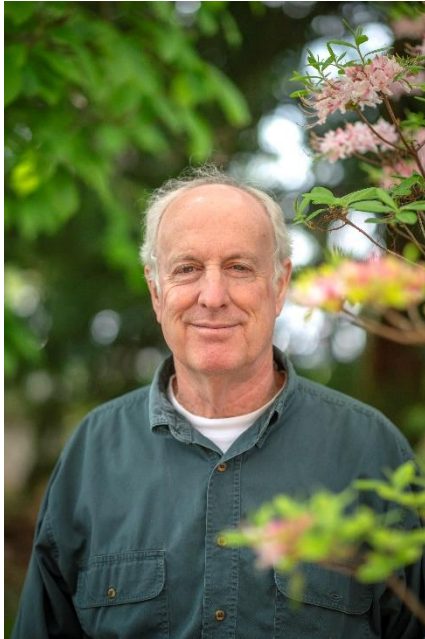
Marilyn Gorham,  
WIMGA President

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## WIMGA Annual Meeting

The Continuing Education Committee is excited to feature Doug Tallamy for our **Annual Meeting on January 13, 2025**. Doug Tallamy is with the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware, where he has authored 112 research publications and has taught insect-related courses for 43 years. Chief among his research goals is to better understand the many ways insects interact with plants and how such interactions determine the diversity of animal communities. His books include *Bringing Nature Home*, *The Living Landscape*, co-authored with Rick Darke, *Nature's Best Hope*, a New York Times Best Seller, and *The Nature of Oaks*, winner of the American Horticultural Society's 2022 book award. In 2021 he co-founded Homegrown National Park with Michelle Alfandari ([HomegrownNationalPark.org](http://HomegrownNationalPark.org)). His awards include recognition from The Garden Writers Association, Audubon, The National Wildlife Federation, Allegheny College, Ecoforesters, The Garden Club of America, The Herb Society, and The American Horticultural Association.



**Nature's Best Hope** - Recent headlines about global insect declines and three billion fewer birds in North America are a bleak reality check about how ineffective our current landscape designs have been at sustaining the plants and animals that sustain us. Such losses are not an option if we wish to continue our current standard of living on Planet Earth. The good news is that none of this is inevitable. Choosing the right plants for our landscapes will not only address the biodiversity crisis but help fight our climate crisis as well. Tallamy will discuss simple steps that each of us can, and must, take to reverse declining biodiversity, why we must change our adversarial relationship with nature to a collaborative one, and why we, ourselves, are nature's best hope.

## Continuing Education Calendar

*All events will be on Zoom and tentatively scheduled for 6:30pm*

Monday, January 13, 2025	ANNUAL MEETING
February 4, 2025	Featured Speaker: Doug Tallamy, <i>Nature's Best Hope</i> Doug Tallamy, Homegrown National Park <i>This talk will be available to non-members for \$10 – Free to WIMGA members</i>
March 4, 2025	<b>March Speaker Series: \$30 for WIMGA members and \$45 for non-members</b> Emily May, Xerces Society Pesticides, Pollinators and the Garden
March 12, 2025	Glenn Herold, the Cottage Gardener Ephemerals and Woodland Plants
March 19, 2025	Glenn Herold Unusual Perennials through the Three Seasons
April 2, 2025	Melody Orban, Herb Society of America

## WIMGA Board Elections

A call went out last month for nominations for an At-Large Director on the State WIMGA Board. Only one nomination was received and therefore no election is necessary. Congratulations to Diane Thieme on serving another three-year term as At-Large Director!

Diane Thieme was a high school educator, department chairwoman, and coach, all of which required exacting organizational skills and creative problem solving while working with diverse populations and personalities. After retirement, she completed UW Extension Master Gardener training in 2010. Since being certified, she is approaching 5,000 MGV hours of service. She is a past Vice President and President of the South-East Wisconsin Master Gardener Association (SEWMG).



From 2013-2021, Diane served as co-chair coordinator of the SEWMG Perennial Plant Sale fund raiser. The Sale consistently reached 1,000 customers and did \$50,000 – \$60,000 in sales. She, along with sale co-chairs, presented at the 2016 Midwest MGV Conference on how to run a successful plant sale. She has also presented educational programs on growing and dividing perennials, container planting, and identifying Jumping Worms. Diane regularly volunteers at the Lynden Sculpture Gardens and the North Point Lighthouse gardens to get her gardening fix (along with tending to over 100 roses in her own yard). Additionally, she helps plan the SEWMG annual member picnic, silent auction, and Holiday party.

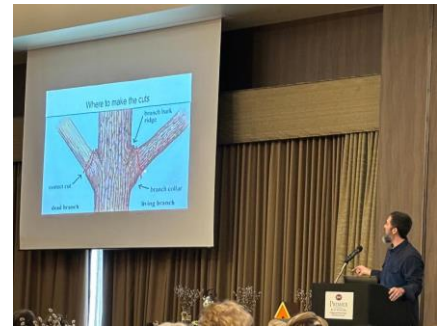
While serving on the WIMGA Board of Directors for the past 6 years, Diane has worked on WIMGA and SEWMGA bylaws and Standard Operating Procedures revisions, restructuring of WIMGA standing committees, and the development of the original Honored Status category. She is currently the co-chair of the WIMGA Continuing Education Committee and a member of the Finance Committee.

## WIMGA Grant Report Outagamie County Master Gardener Association

*compiled by WIMGA Local Representative, Donna Nett-Heus*

The Outagamie County Master Gardener Association is pleased to report that the grants awarded to the organization were used to educate and assist a vast number of citizens. OCMGA was awarded a \$250 grant for a library and speaker series. Master Gardener Presents is a series of regularly scheduled horticultural programs that are open to the public at no cost. This program started in 2009 in cooperation with Appleton, and subsequently, the Kimberly, public libraries. The libraries have been providing the venues and publicity while OCMGA has provided the programming. Since the start of the program, there have been over 150 programs with over 4,000 attendees. This year's topics included: "Flower Bed Design" with speaker Cathy Reich, owner of Beauty By The Yard, landscaping service; and "The Pollinator Friendly Garden" with speaker Amanda Zehren, Wild Ones of the Fox Valley.

On the state level, OCMGA organizes and provides an annual Garden Conference each Spring, minus the COVID years; of course. This year's 2024 Garden Conference featured Ben Futa, national speaker on botany, who is best known for his nationally syndicated show called Garden Center Show. Ben's presentation, "Creative Garden Design" reached approximately 150 conference participants. The \$400 grant helped finance this entertaining and educational speaker.



OCMGA is very grateful to WIMGA for helping us reach so many enthusiastic gardeners.

### **North River Fronts Park Youth Garden**

*Judy Mitchell, Eau Claire MG and Volunteer Leader*

On a recent morning, Eau Claire's North River Fronts Park was teeming with people: sixteen 4th graders, three chaperones, two staff members of FoodWise (University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension) and two Eau Claire Master Gardeners. This was the first week of our Healthy Eating summer program.



Four days a week for six weeks, the Boys & Girls Club brings kids to the park for our program. In the garden, Master Gardeners teach the kids how to grow and harvest their own vegetables. In a nearby pavilion, FoodWise teaches healthy eating, and the kids taste test fresh produce. Sixty-two kids participated in the first week of this year's program.

In the garden, we have 19 raised beds and almost 500 square feet of growing space. Six Master Gardeners volunteer for the Eau Claire Parks Adopt-A-Park program. We plant, maintain and teach in the garden. Originally installed about 2006, the garden has been well used. Last year, we identified improvements that are needed to sustain this garden into the future and developed a 3-year plan to renew the beds and upgrade our watering equipment.



We were very pleased in late 2023 to receive a WIMGA \$400 grant to start the first year of work on this plan which included buying a new hose reel and renewing six of the raised beds. We purchased a sturdy 4-wheeled hose reel cart that makes it much easier to water the garden.

We pledged the rest of WIMGA's grant for lumber to replace six of our raised beds. Thanks to a Food Garden grant, subsequently secured by FoodWise, and demolition and construction assistance offered by Parks and the Chippewa Valley Home Builders Association, we are now set to complete our Year 1 work by replacing six of our raised beds in mid-August.

Thank you WIMGA! This project is fun to do and a great way to get kids excited about horticulture.

## Apples and More About Apples

Article by: Donna Mae Stohlmann, St Croix Valley MG

Everybody loves apples, red, green, or yellow ones! Apple pie, apple crisp, cakes, salads, apple sauce, and the list goes on. What do you know about how and who planted the first apple seed? If you like apples, you owe a debt of gratitude to Johnny Appleseed.



JOHNNY APPLESEED.

Born: John Chapman  
September 26, 1774  
Leominster, Province of Massachusetts Bay,  
British America  
Died: March 18, 1845 (aged 70)  
Fort Wayne, Indiana  
Other names: Appleseed  
Occupation(s): Missionary, conservationist,  
nurseryman, orchardist and gardener  
Known for proliferation of orchards throughout the  
American frontier

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/John-Chapman>

Johnny Appleseed (born Johnathan Chapman) was an American pioneer nurseryman who introduced trees grown with apple seeds (as opposed to trees grown with grafting) in parts of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Ontario, as well as the northern counties of West Virginia. He became an American legend while still alive, due to his kind, generous ways, his leadership in

conservation, and the symbolic importance he attributed to apples. He was also a missionary for The New Church and the inspiration for many museums and historical sites such as the Johnny Appleseed Museum in Urbana, Ohio.

Apples are heterozygous, which means when you plant the seeds from an apple, each resulting tree will bear fruit that differs from the source apple. If you want to replicate a tasty apple, you must graft a branch from the source tree onto a seedling.

Chapman planted seeds he had gathered at cider mills. The resulting trees produced a variety of apples; though they were often inedible, they were perfectly good for making cider. Chapman was an 18<sup>th</sup> century businessman who sold apple seedlings for about six to seven cents apiece. However, if people were low on funds he was willing to barter goods in exchange for his seedlings. And when a struggling family had nothing to trade, Chapman would give them seedlings; at times he even included a gift of cash. His generosity did not keep Chapman from being successful. At the time of his death, he owned approximately 1,200 acres of property.

Planting apple or pear trees was a way for settlers to have their land claim recognized by the government (an orchard demonstrated they intended to stay permanently). By selling seedlings to people arriving in the wilds of Ohio and Indiana, Chapman made creating an orchard with at least fifty apple trees a lot easier.

Chapman cared deeply about animals, including insects. During his later life, he was a vegetarian. Chapman chose not to marry, as he believed that he would find his soulmate in Heaven if she did not appear to him on Earth.

Looking at today's crop: The largest producer of apples is China, taking up 50% of the market. The US only grows 8%, and Wisconsin 1%. Bloom in Wisconsin takes place around the beginning middle of May, and depending on bloom can ripen as early as 75 days. Because of the encroaching winter, Wisconsin is only able to grow certain varieties. Wisconsin's apple picking season began at the end of August and will carry us through October.



Differences in terrain just in our state, be it hills or locations by water, affect how apples are grown and how many. The coldness of Wisconsin weather, no matter the location, is something farmers must watch out for. Despite sometimes wintry weather Wisconsin still offers an overall excellent environment for apples.

Another modern-day Johnny Appleseed is [Tom Brown](#), in 1998, he took a trip to the farmer's market that changed everything. The apples had bright green, pink, black-purple, and yellow flesh, and they came in all shapes and sizes. Upon tasting the many types, Brown found that their flavors were as diverse as their appearances, from the Newtown Pippin to the Grimes Golden to the Arkansas Black.



Brown began talking to the vendor, learning the apples he was selling were standardized in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and had disappeared from the market by 1950. The vendor, orchardist Maurie Marshall, had obtained most of his old varieties personally from mountain homesteaders and apple-hunting expeditions. Marshall found American orchards were growing about 14,000 different apple varieties at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, mostly in Appalachia.

This abundance of apples was rooted in the colonists' beverage preferences. Fermented beverages were popular at the time since water was not always safe to drink. Apple orchards were easier to maintain than barley fields for beer, so cider became the preferred alcoholic drink. Because of this, apple orchards were planted in abundance throughout the East Coast during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, supplying the colonists with homegrown apple cider.

Appalachia offered ideal growing conditions, from the hot summers to the rich soil. Because of this, the Shenandoah Valley was the top apple growing region by the early 1800s, and apple growers were experimenting with abandon. But, due to urban migration, factory tampering, and food corporations, the Appalachian tradition of heritage apples was destroyed throughout the 1900s. Small orchards eventually went out of business, as conglomerates were only interested in apple varieties that matured quickly and withstood long-distance shipping. By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were less than one hundred apple varieties being produced by commercial orchards, and 11,000 heirloom apples had gone extinct.

Brown began to track down growing locations of heirloom varieties like the Royal Lemon, Neverfail, Candy Stripe, and Black Winesap. He drives over 30,000 miles a year to identify and catalog heritage species, and his heritage orchard in North Carolina is filled with clones of rediscovered heritage varieties. "Saving an apple from the brink of extinction is a miraculous feeling," says Brown. "It's incredibly rewarding—and incredibly addictive!" Brown has saved about 1,200 and hopes to recover another one hundred varieties or more in his lifetime.

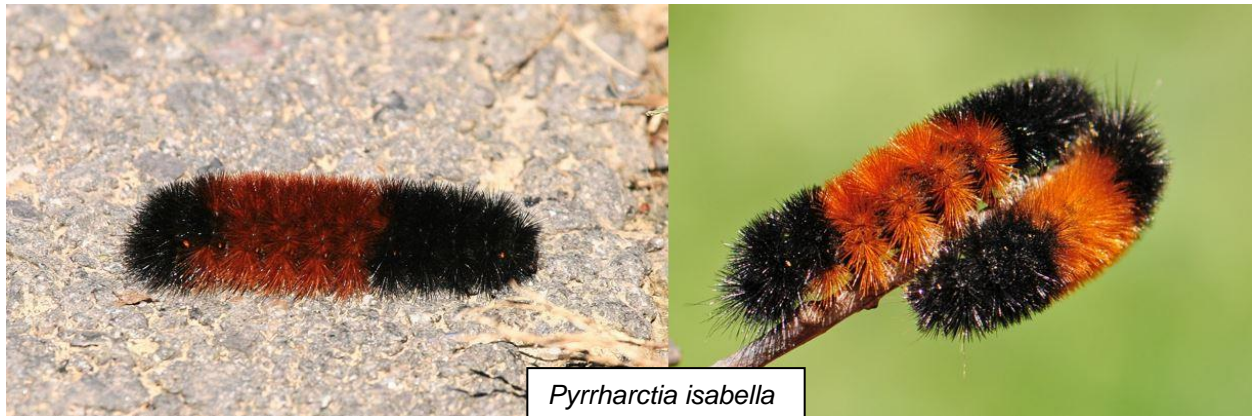


***“Surely the apple is the noblest of fruits.” Henry David Thoreau***

## **Woolly Bear Caterpillars**

*Article by: Donna Mae Stohlmann, St Croix Valley MG*

I was at my weeding job cleaning a big patch of weeds and tall grass when I discovered four Woolly Bear caterpillars all curled up under wet grass. “How cute,” I thought, but I remember a story my mom told me. They can predict the weather!! I just needed to measure the rusty-red area and if it is big and wide it will be a mild winter, if small, a bad winter. That is easy...I could be better than the weatherman. To complicate things each caterpillar had a distinct size rusty-red band, now what do I do? Unfortunately, this folk story is not true. 😊 But I always believed my mom, she taught me about gardening. So, I left all four of them curled up, as they must have been sleeping after they ate some delicious tall wet grass.



*Pyrrharctia isabella*

### **Identifying Characteristics:**

- Coloring is black with a wide rusty-red band in the middle.
- The Woolly Bear caterpillar is covered in dense, coarse hairs.
- Transformed into Isabella Tiger Moths.
- Woolly Bears are generalist feeders, they will live on and eat nearly any plant!

*Pyrrharctia isabella*, the Isabella tiger moth, whose larval form is called the banded woolly bear, or woolly worm, occurs in the United States and southern Canada. It was first formally named by James Edward Smith in 1797.

Woolly Bears are weird, they do not hibernate at all! Instead of burrowing or pupating to escape the cold, Woolly Bears allow themselves to freeze solid. They have a unique chemical in their blood that allows them to thaw out and continue in the spring as if nothing happened. Their hair does not contain any toxins or irritants, but some people are sensitive to the hairs and may get a slight rash if they touch a hair. I did not touch them. Woolly Bear caterpillars and their adult-form, Isabella Tiger Moths, are found in incredibly varied climates, even the Arctic! Because they love to eat . . . herbs, tree leaves, and grasses, they can be found anywhere plants are growing.



Patrick (PJ) Liesch from UW Madison Entomology Department said, "Overall Woolly Bear caterpillars are a common native insect. No need for concern and no need to harm them. The adults can be beneficial pollinators."



Additional Resources from the Extension Horticulture Program

**Ask the Experts:**

[A Monthly Garden and Landscape Q&A Series](#)

Sponsored by the UW-Madison Division of Extension Horticulture Program

[Ask Your Gardening Question](#) This site is monitored by Wisconsin Master Gardeners.

## 2024 PDDC Plant Disease Talks

*Brian Hudelson, UW-Madison Plant Pathology*



Each month in 2024, the University of Wisconsin Plant Disease Diagnostics Clinic will sponsor a free Zoom presentation on a plant disease-related topic.

To register for one or more talks, visit <https://pddc.wisc.edu/>. Check at the bottom of the page for a link to the registration form.

### **Confessions of a Black Thumb: Plants That I Have Killed (or at Least Seriously Maimed)**

November 20, 2024. 6:30 – 8:30pm

Learn about the favorite plants of Brian Hudelson (aka Dr. Death) and his epic failures in attempting to grow these plants in his home garden, either through his encouragement of plant diseases, his insistence on practicing "Darwinian gardening" or through his sheer gardening stupidity. Use these cautionary tales to improve your own gardening skills.

### **Evil Twins: Plant Disease Look-Alikes**

December 18, 2024. 6:30 – 8:30pm

Learn about common diseases that have similar symptoms and can be misidentified but may have very different management strategies.



Article ideas, events, contributions and any WIMGA related questions/concerns may be sent to [news@wimga.org](mailto:news@wimga.org)

### November 2024 Newsletter

*The Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association Newsletter is published six (6) times a year (January, March, May, July, September and November). Articles, artwork and ideas are welcome, final selection and editing are the responsibility of the editorial staff. The opinions reflected in this publication are expressions from individual master gardeners or associations and not necessarily the viewpoint of the UW-Madison Department of Horticulture, Division of Extension Master Gardener Program Office.*



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Serving its members since 1992

Visit the WIMGA Website at

<http://www.wimga.org/>

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*The Wisconsin Extension Master Gardener Program supports a network of individuals dedicated to horticulture education, service, and lifelong learning. Through unbiased university research-based horticulture training they are equipped to address needs and opportunities in their community and throughout the state. An EEO/AA employer, University of Wisconsin-Madison provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title VI, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act requirements.*