

IOGA



Hoosier Organic Gardener

July 2014

Indiana Organic Gardeners Association

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IOGA MISSION:

To educate ourselves and others in reasons for and methods of environmentally friendly gardening; and to encourage the reduction of chemical dependency in gardens, lawns and farms.

The Grass is Always Greener

Who doesn't like a nice, lush, green lawn? Quite a few people, actually. Some folks have chosen to adorn their home with colorful flowers in lieu of monotone grass; carefree perennials over endless mowing; fruit trees, vegetables, and herbs instead of non-edible greenery.

Grass is a ubiquitous plant that is quite selfish and demanding of our efforts. During the warm months, it wants water, and lots of it. It is easily addicted to fertilizer, which costs money and in turn, pollutes our retention ponds, rivers, and streams, and makes it unsafe for people and pets to come into contact with the newly fertilized grass (what is it doing to the animals and insects who can't read the little warning flags?). The fertilizer makes the grass grow, prompting even more tending and mowing, using fossil fuels and polluting our air. What does it give us in return? Seems like a one-sided relationship to me.

I heard a statistic recently that we grow more grass in this country than any other "crop". If true, that is staggering. Think about that. More grass than corn, soybeans, wheat, and other food crops. There is concern that in coming years, we won't be able to generate enough food to feed the increasing population. This is the basis of one of Monsanto's arguments for developing genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Their position is that by genetically modifying plants, yields will increase and we'll be able to feed the world. If we simply replace grass with edible plants, it seems the solution may be in our own backyard!

There are many benefits of growing your own flowers and food organically. Planting edible vegetables, herbs and fruit trees on your property allows you to grow your favorite foods, while saving money and reducing your impact on the environment. Think of how much fossil fuel you would save by walking out to your yard or community garden to enjoy its bounty, rather than driving to the grocery store to select items that have travelled 2,000 miles. The local birds and insects benefit from a diverse landscape that provides them food and shelter.

Even if you don't want to give up all of your grass, there are ways to keep it happy and green using methods that don't harm the environment or creatures around it. As with any plant, healthy soil leads to healthy grass. Using compost tea is an excellent way to build healthy soil that will support deep roots and sustain it without the use of chemical fertilizers. The deep roots reduce the need to water. To learn more about how to care for your lawn naturally including how-to videos go to www.safelawns.org. Spotts Garden Service is a local landscaping company that claims to offer organic lawn service. They can be found at www.spottsgardens.com.

Happy and Healthy Gardening,

-Lynne



Lynne Sullivan
IOGA President

Monarchs and Milkweeds

by Tony Branam

Search the Internet for monarch butterflies and milkweeds, and you will quickly find that both populations are considered to be at a crisis low level.

In a report cited by Larissa Walker in her [article](#) at www.EcoWatch.com, milkweed plants in Iowa crop fields have been reduced by 98 percent over the past 13 years. The primary factor for the decline is the increased use of broad spectrum herbicide [glycosate](#) the active ingredient in Roundup.

The monarch butterfly is completely dependent on the milkweed as the food source of its larvae (caterpillars). As a result of milkweed losses the monarch is also in decline, according to the Xerces Society. The society cites other causes for reduced monarch populations such as habitat losses, changes in weather patterns and insecticide uses, but eradication of milkweeds appears to be the most significant. Residential landowners are just as guilty as agricultural producers in the indiscriminate applications of herbicides, pesticides, insecticides and fungicides in our obsessive quest to live in a sterile and controlled environment.

An adult monarch butterfly will migrate 2,000 miles to its summer home in the opposite hemisphere (north or south) to lay eggs on a milkweed host plant. The larvae hatches and feeds on the milkweed; and the larvae pupates in an emerald green chrysalis. When an adult butterfly emerges, it begins consuming nectar from late-blooming flowers and migrates 2,000 miles back to where its parents originated to repeat the sequence. The monarch migration is seen as an incredible feat of instinct, endurance and navigation because it is the first and only time the adult will make this journey in its lifetime to specific wintering sites in Mexico and southern California. The significance of using the milkweed is a survival strategy. According to the Xerces Society a larvae consume the sticky milkweed sap, the larvae and eventual adults become distasteful to birds and other predators that associate the orange and black butterfly with a bad taste.



Adult Monarch on Butterfly Milkweed



Monarch Chrysalis



Four Leaf Milkweed

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Plants Database <http://plants.usda.gov/java/> identifies 16 species of milkweed native to Indiana, including [Mead's milkweed](#), *Asclepias meadii*, which is considered endangered. Re-establishment efforts by the US Fish & Wildlife Service are underway in the prairie region of northwest Indiana. The three most plentiful milkweed species are the [common milkweed](#), *A. syriaca*, [swamp milkweed](#), *A. incarnata*, and [butterfly milkweed](#), *A. tuberosa*. As the name implies, the common milkweed can be found on a range of soil types in full or partial sun in crop fields, roadside ditches woodland edges. The swamp milkweed prefers site conditions that are damp to excessively wet, while the butterfly milkweed prefers dry habitats in full sun such as meadows. The butterfly milkweed is most sought after as a flower garden plant for its short bushy stature, orange-red blossoms and deep green foliage. The [four-leaf milkweed](#)

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A. quadrifolia, is a less common species found primarily on dry, shaded woodland slopes of southern Indiana.

There is a long list of other plants vital to the monarch butterfly and its migration cycle. Before their departure each autumn, the adults feed on the nectar of late-blooming flowers such as the asters, goldenrods, Joe-Pye weed, bergamot, sunflowers, coneflowers and many more. The following are suggested native flower species that are relatively easy to acquire, beneficial to monarchs and native pollinators, and offer three phases of summer blossoms.

Early: Foxglove, beardtongue, black-eyed Susan, purple coneflowers, and wild indigo.

Middle: Any species of milkweeds, Joe-Pye weed, blazing star, and wild bergamot.

Late: New England aster, most species of goldenrods, obedient plant, and mountain mint.

So the question that is probably on your mind is: "Where can I get milkweed seeds and seedlings?" The Xerces Society and Monarch Joint Venture, www.monarchjointventure.org, are partners with the USDA-NRCS in the dissemination of information on monarch butterflies and pollinators, and they provide Seed Finder web links to search for seeds and seedlings by state. The Milkweed Seed Finder can be found at www.xerces.org/milkweed-seed-finder. Additional information on pollinators and site conditions for specific plants is offered through Heather Holm's posters at www.pollinatorsnativeplants.com/plant-lists--posters or her book, "Pollinators of Native Plants." A wealth of information is available through the Xerces Society at www.xerces.org and www.monarchwatch.org. If the monarch is going to have any chance of survival, it is essential that milkweed plants are maintained on crop field edges, meadows, pastures and roadside ditches throughout the Midwest.

Tony Branam is an IOGA member living in Indianapolis, Indiana.



Editors' Note: Above is a Patch of our Milkweed. We Found Four Monarch Caterpillars on the Plants the Second Week of June. One of Them (Arrow Above) is Shown on the Right.

April IOGA Meeting

After the delicious pitch-in lunch, President Lynne Sullivan first pointed out that IOGA gear such as bags and shirts were available for sale on a side table. Karen Nelson had brought eggs for sale at \$3/dozen and honey at \$10 a container. Jennifer Kost-Barker introduced us to a cute rescue bunny she had brought, hoping that one of our members would want to give it a good home. She reminded us that bunny poo is an excellent addition to a compost pile. The Zionsville library had ducklings for sale.

Keith O'Dell of [Castaway Compost](#) told us about the worm compost maker he had donated for the auction. This flow-through compost maker has worms in it to break down the materials. The compost comes out after about two months.

[Earth Day Celebration](#) is on Sat., April 26 from 11-4 at White River State Park. We will have a booth, which will need volunteers to man it. Some members asked about recycling old batteries. Lynn Jenkins said that standard alkaline batteries can now be thrown away in regular trash.

Other upcoming events include the [Master Gardener Conference](#) from June 12-14 at the Marriott North. The [INPAWS](#) (Indiana Native

Plant & Wildflower Society) Plant Sale is on Sat., May 10 at Park Tudor School.

Places of interest that were discussed include [Urban Farmer Seeds](#) in Jolietville (Westfield) on Hwy. 32, which offers a great variety of organic and heirloom seeds. [Agrarian Urban Homestead & Supply](#) is an urban homestead and supply store located on 49th St. just west of College Ave. (661 E. 49th St.). Their mission is to further the current environmental sustainability movement. [Farm to Fork Market](#) at Normandy Farms is located on the corner of 79th St. and Marsh Rd., near Traders Point. Open year round, it is Indiana's only chemical-free market.

Claudia Clark mentioned that their cabbage and broccoli plants had been planted outside, but the hard cold snap damaged them severely (Editors' note: they eventually recovered). She also encouraged members to write and submit articles and stories of interest about organic gardening topics for the newsletter. (Editors' Note: If there is anything you are particularly proud of in your garden, send as a photo.)

David Englert said they have about 4,500 heads of garlic which they will sell to Napoli and Patachou, local restaurants owned by Martha Hoover. She is one of the first to use fresh, locally grown foods in her restaurants.



IOGA Members and Guests Partaking in the Great Pitch-In Lunch

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Next was the much anticipated Plant Auction, run by Ron and Claudia Clark. Many plants and gardening items were auctioned off. Vegetable/fruit plants in the auction included the following: numerous heirloom tomato varieties, several varieties of peppers, broccoli, kale, strawberries, Swiss chard, horseradish, parsley, gooseberry, and black current. Domesticated flowers, wildflowers, and herb plants included in the auction included the following: iris, celandine poppy, yellow evening primrose, Virginia bluebells, hosta, forget-me-nots, catnip, canna bulbs, sunflowers, tiger daylilies, Shasta daisy, sweet woodruff, Japanese anemone, apple mint, purple coneflower, aloe vera

Items at the auction that were donated by local businesses included 1) a tomato cage and seeds from Urban Farmer Seeds, 2) two \$25 gift certificates from Rosie's Garden Shop, 3) organic fertilizer, organic spot weeder, & insecticidal soap from Sundown Gardens, 4) bags of organic fertilizer from Altum's Horticultural Center & Landscape, and 5) a

worm composting bin and two boxes of worm compost from Castaway Compost.

The sale was a great success, netting a total of \$823.50. Bag and shirt sales brought in \$90; so the net profit for the day was \$913.50, the most ever for this event.

- Margaret Smith, Secretary



IOGA Shirts and Bags for Sale



Some of the Plants Ready for the Auction



Lynne Hirshman Raises the Bid

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Keith O'Dell of Castaway Compost
Discusses the Worm Compost Maker
that he Gave to IOGA for the Auction

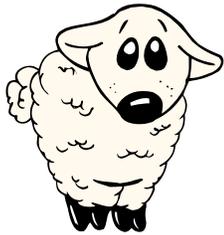
Jennifer Kost-Baker is
Looking for a Home for
Her Rescued Bunny.



IOGA Members and Guests Getting Ready for the IOGA Plant & Garden Auction

LETTERS:

Babydoll Sheep Twins



I wanted to give you an update; On March 24th Frank's & Anderson Woods' Baby Dolls (Burt A.K.A 'Frank' & Dolly) have successfully birthed twins. One female and one male measuring 8 & 11lbs, and are doing great.

They are going to be a wonderful addition to Anderson Woods and most likely serve as ambassadors for the camp, destined to be popular with the kids this summer

Anderson Woods Caretaker

(Editors' Note: Last year IOGA member Frank C gave a Babydoll Southdown sheep to IOGA member David Colby and his wife Judy for their Anderson Woods Camp near Bristow, Indiana. The Colbys named the sheep "Frank". Frank also loaned the Colbys an ewe named Dolly.)



Babydoll Southdown Sheep Twins, Donnie & Marie, Born March 24 to Frank & Dolly

Growing a Greener World

Linda and I watch <http://www.growingagreenerworld.com/weedless-gardening/> whenever we have the opportunity. It opens up one's mind to many different options. I tagged one of the episodes and am about to watch it as the computer is buffering. So as I wait, for those who have not seen the show, give it a try. It might be worthy of a line or two in the newsletter.

With dirty hands, I wave so long for now.

John Walker

White Violet Center

Oh my goodness, we love this place!!!!

Jennifer Kost-Barker



IOGA Mentoring Program

Do you have some gardening questions? Do you want to learn more about IOGA? If you are an IOGA member who would like a gardening mentor assigned to you, or if you are an IOGA member who would like to be a mentor, please contact Lynne Sullivan at sagaemoo@yahoo.com. A mentor doesn't need to be an expert in all things about organic gardening, but someone who wants to connect with others who are interested in learning more. While the level of involvement is up to each person, here are some things that mentors can do: 1) Reach out to the new member and welcome to the group, 2) Offer to carpool to meetings, and 3) Discuss gardening experiences and questions.

Editors' Corner

Light Weight, Portable Bug Vacuum

Last year I looked into a squash flower and saw several cucumber beetles crawling about. I knew there was nothing I could do to eliminate them. I could not use a Pyrethrin spray insecticide because that would be detrimental to pollinators and reaching into the flower to remove the beetles was too difficult. This year I purchase a portable vacuum. Now I can suck the cucumber beetles out of the flowers. I have also used the vacuum to capture asparagus beetles from our asparagus plants.

The portable vacuum that I purchased is a Sears Craftman C3 19.2-Volt Wet/Dry Vac. The vacuum runs off of the Sears 19.2 volt rechargeable batteries used with many of Sears portable electric tools. The vacuum is small and very light weight, but very powerful. The purchase price for the vacuum was \$40 on sale (normally \$50) which did not include the battery. If you already have the Sears 19.2 volt battery for your other Sears tools, then this is a great price for a portable vacuum of this quality. If you do not have a battery, then you will need to purchase a battery and a battery charger which is expensive. A battery will cost between \$30 to \$90 depending upon the capacity of the battery that you choose

A comment on the Sears website from a user: *“If you do purchase this vacuum, I would recommend using either the Sears high capacity lithium battery (\$80, \$50 on sale) or the new XCP lithium battery (\$100, \$90 on sale). The Ni-cad battery (\$40, \$30 on sale) will not last long with this power hungry vac. I have all three types of batteries, and the XCP battery lasted the longest with 26 minutes of continuous run. The high capacity lithium battery lasted 16 minutes of continuous run, and finally the Ni-cad battery lasted about 10 minutes with depreciable loss in power.”*

A Sears craftsman C3 19.2 volt lithium-ion battery charger alone costs \$45 not on sale. A Sears craftsman C3 19.2 volt lithium-ion compact battery & charger starter kit costs \$80, \$70 on sale.

This portable vacuum is also great for vacuuming the inside of your car.



Our Grandson Max Clark Vacuuming Up Asparagus Beetles Off the Top of a New Asparagus Plant Using the portable Sears Craftman C3 19.2 Volt



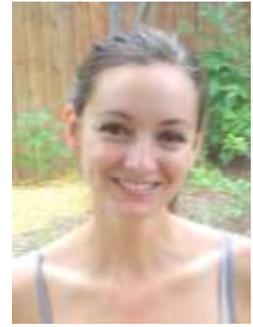
Our Large Head of Packman Broccoli

Garlic Last Year, Beets and Cherry Tomatoes This Year

IOGA knows me as Dave, the backyard gardener. But I am so much more. If I'm not at work as a financial analyst developing my own mathematical equations to better sell apartment buildings, you may find me competing or coaching on the sand volleyball court. Within all these different aspects of my life, one theme runs constant. I am motivated to do everything I participate in at the highest level I am capable. Mediocrity is not my forte. In regards to gardening, I was ready to take it to the next level. My wife and I enjoy backyard gardening, in fact, we even fell in love because of it. However, I wanted to enrich my experience, I wanted to learn new things, I wanted to earn money from my own sweat equity! In other words, I wanted to get in over my head!



David Englert



Beth Englert

In previous years, I had great success with growing garlic. I always grew about one hundred heads, which only required about a three square foot area. The next obvious step was borrowing a one thousand square foot unused garden from a neighbor and planting four thousand heads of garlic. A logical decision, right? The soil was spectacular, having been tended to by the neighbor's grandfather for the past fifty years but had become overgrown with weeds and trees since his passing. We lumber-jacked our way to the black gold underneath to pave out four long beds for the garlic to grow. Beth created a bulb planter by drilling seven equally spaced holes in a board and securing one inch dowel rods cut to size and sharpened at the end. Seven at a time, we slowly filled our new urban farm. I found all sorts of garlic varieties: Bogatyr, Russian Red, Purple Glazer, German Red and Music. I sought out restaurants specializing in local fare and was surprised to find that most chefs had not heard of these varieties. Most of our crop was sold to restaurants, but I also became a farmer's market vendor for the first time in my life. The process was hard, the profits were lousy, but the experience was priceless.



Some of Beth and Dave's Beet and Cherry Tomato Plants

This growing season comes with a more specialized approach. I have long admired Café Patachou for their dedication to quality, local food. I emailed the growing chain, including their pizzeria, Napolese, and asked if they had a need I could fill. Two thousand beets and fifty cherry tomato plants later, efficiency is the theme of the season. Greens from thinned out beets get eaten or given to neighbors and weeding is at a minimum thanks to last year's constant tending. As the beets are carted off to be sold, parsnips will take their place.

I know I may never quit my desk job to be a full time urban farmer, but when I get my hands in the soil or make a buck from my own garden, I am truly rich in that moment. Who knows what I will grow next year, but I do know that I will carry each season on my back to create the best gardening experience I am capable of. Off to harvest...I'll be journaling my successes and failures as well as further evolution of our business, Urban Sprout, in the Fall 2014 newsletter.

Happy growing! Dave, the entrepreneurial urban farmer

Beth and David Englert are IOGA members living in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Plant a Clover Cover Crop Between Your Rows

IOGA member Jon Thomas sent the photo on the right showing a white clover cover crop in his garden between the rows of lettuce and Royal Burgundy beans.

Jon says, “the lettuce is losing its battle with the cover crop. I will remember that next time to only do cover around stronger rooted things like beans.”

What a great way to add nitrogen and organic material to your garden while keeping the weeds down!



Clover Cover Crop Between the Rows in Jon Thomas' Garden

Directions to the IOGA Meeting July 19 at the White Violet Center ([Map](#))

The White Violet Center for Eco-Justice is located at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College (SMWC), about 5 miles northwest of Terre Haute, Indiana. (Approximately 1 hour, 15 minutes from I-70 & I-465 W)

Use this address for GPS (Main gate of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College):

3401 Saint Marys Road
West Terre Haute, IN 47885

Directions from I-465 West and I-70 in Indianapolis to Main Gate: Take I-70 west towards Terra Haute 63.3 miles to Exit 7 (US-41/US-150). Go north on US-41 N/US-150 W/S. 3rd St. about 2.5 miles to US 40. Turn left (west) onto US-40 W/US-150 W/Bayh Way and go 1.8 miles to 3rd St. where US-40 and US-150 split and US-150 W turns north. Take US-150 W/N. 3rd St. north 2.6 miles to St. Marys Rd. Turn left (west) onto St. Marys Rd. and go 0.8 mile up a hill to the main gate to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College (The Ave.) which will be the second road to the right

Directions from SR-63 South to Main Gate:

Approximately 9 miles past the intersection of SR-63 and SR-163, turn right (west) onto Bolton Rd. (look for the SMWC sign). Follow Bolton Rd. 1.0 miles until you reach US-150. Turn left (south) onto SR-150 and go 1.5 miles to St. Marys Rd. Turn right (west) onto St. Marys Rd. and go 0.8 mile up a hill to the main gate to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College (The Ave.) which will be the second road to the right.

From Main Gate of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College to the White Violet Center:

From St. Marys Rd. turn right through the main gate onto The Ave. and go to Grotto Lane. Turn right onto Grotto Lane, then left on Providence Place. At Marion Dr. turn left and then make an immediate left into a parking lot where you should park. The White Violet Center is behind the building facing the parking lot.

\$ Treasurer's Report \$

2nd Quarter 2014

Opening Balance April 1, 2014 \$ 3792.14

Income

Membership Dues	\$ 226.00
Plant & Garden Auction	\$ 823.50
IOGA T-Shirt/Bags Sales	\$ 90.00
<u>Room Deposit Refund</u>	<u>\$ 100.00</u>
Total	\$ 1239.50

Expenses

6' Folding Table	\$ 48.13
<u>Bank Service Fee</u>	<u>\$ 2.50</u>
Total	\$ 50.63

Closing Balance June 30, 2014 \$ 4981.01

Respectfully submitted by Ron Clark, Treasurer

Ask us...!



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UPCOMING MEETINGS

Mark your calendar

IOGA generally meets quarterly on the third Saturday of the month. Mark your calendar for upcoming meetings.



- July 19, 2014
- October 18, 2014
- January 17, 2015
- April 18, 2015
(Plant Auction)

New IOGA Members

- Lana Lytle, Brownsburg, IN 46112
- Ana Harp, Indianapolis, IN 46219
- Ann Smith, Indianapolis, IN 46219
- Elaine Hobbie, Indianapolis, IN 46229
- Jesse Kirkham, Danville, IN 46122



How do I join IOGA?

Dues are \$10.00 per individual member, and \$12.00 for a dual membership (same address, one newsletter).

To join, please send your annual dues to:

Please include ALL of the following information:

I prefer my newsletter to be emailed mailed.



IOGA
7282 E 550 S
Whitestown, IN 46075

- Full Name
- 2nd Name (if dual membership)
- Address
- Phone Number
- Email Address

IOGA
Meeting
Sat. July 19
11:00 am

The White Violet Center for Eco-Justice
Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College
3401 Saint Marys Road
West Terre Haute, IN 47885 ([Map](#))
11:00 Arrive and Welcome Guests
11:15—12:00 Introductions & Gardening Q&A
12:00—12:30 Great Pitch-in Lunch
12:30—12:45 Business Meeting
12:45— 1:00 Introduction to White Violet Center
1:00— Garden Tour

Meeting: In 1995 [White Violet Center for ECO-Justice](#) returned 343 acres of cropland to organic production and created five acres of organic gardens and two acres of organic orchards. They have recently become certified organic. They have a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program and participate in local farmers markets. The Center also has a herd of alpaca. Following our regular meeting we will have a tour of the gardens, orchards, and greenhouse.

Pitch-in lunch: Bring a favorite dish filled with food ("home-made" and/or "organic" appreciated) to share and your plate, fork, and drink.

Directions: The White Violet Center is located on the Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College campus. For **directions from your home to the Center, click the word "Map" above, then "Directions" in the upper left part of the web page, enter your home address, and click "Get Directions.** (See page 10 for detailed directions.)

Everyone welcome! Questions, or if lost, call Karen Nelson cell phone (317) 366-1954.

Remember to car pool, if possible.

Join us and bring a friend!

Hoosier Organic Gardener
Claudia and Ron Clark, editors
7282 E 550 S
Whitestown, IN 46075



Join us!
IOGA Meeting
Sat. July 19