What’s Growing On…
The latest news from the Marais des Cygnes Extension Master Gardeners

JUNE 2019 | 104 S. Brayman St., Paola, KS 66071 | 913-294-4306 | www.maraisdescygnes.ksu.edu

Don’t Miss the General Meeting July 9 at Lakemary!

The third quarter general meeting and potluck dinner will be held July 9 at Lakemary Ranch, 6:30 pm.

Instead of a plant exchange among members this year, we encourage EMGs to bring plants from their gardens to share with Lakemary. Our Lakemary-affiliated EMG trainees have suggested that their preference is for perennials. Be sure the plants you bring are well-watered and identified.

Come and enjoy a fun evening at Lakemary Ranch!

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Insect Friends and Foes

On Tuesday, June 25, Dr. Ray Cloyd from K-State will give us the latest information from the world of insects, both the friends of gardeners and our most difficult to control enemies.

Dr. Cloyd is a professor and Extension specialist in ornamental entomology and integrated pest management in Kansas State University’s Department of Entomology, which was ranked the 4th best department of entomology in the world by the Center for World University Rankings in 2017.

Please note that the session starts at 6:00 pm., Extension Office, Paola.

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Native Host Plants for Butterflies

Butterflies go native! Kansas native plants and native butterflies have evolved together in lovely symbiosis. Likewise, native plant lovers and butterfly gardeners are natural soul mates. Indeed, applicants are only asked to list the native plants in their garden to be granted certification by NABA (North American Butterfly Association).

This August 13 presentation (6:30 pm, Extension Office, Paola) will review the butterfly’s lifestyle and showcase stunning photographs of our native butterflies and their native plant hosts. Participants will learn how to expand their native plant focus to attract “flying flowers.” (Hint: we plant for the caterpillars, not the adult butterflies!)

Lenora Larson is a Marais des Cygnes Extension Master Gardener and member of local chapters of both the Idalia Butterfly Society and Kansas Native Plant Society. She maintains a two-acre NABA certified garden on her property, Long Lips Farm, in rural Paola, Kansas. Lenora is a proud “science geek” with a degree in microbiology from Michigan State University, a career in molecular biology and a life-long interest in wildlife, especially the creepy and crawly. A frequent presenter to gardening and community groups, Lenora channels her inner butterfly to combine science and entertainment.
A Beautiful Day At Wendwood

Cheri and Jim Effertz hosted a special Open House for MdC EMGs and friends on June 1. More than 40 years in the making (with 20-plus years of professional input from our own Deb Kitchell), the extensive gardens encompass everything from azaleas to waterfalls. Cheri and Jim truly enjoy sharing their gardens with other gardening enthusiasts.

Thanks to Donna Cook and her committee for organizing a truly enjoyable event for a perfect late spring day!
What Is A Rain Garden?

By Betsy Hasselquist

A rain garden looks and functions much like a perennial garden, but is designed to temporarily hold and soak in rain water runoff from rooftops, driveways, patios, and surrounding land. Planting a rain garden makes better use of the water Mother Nature provides. A rain garden is a garden of native shrubs, perennials and flowers planted in a small depression. It is designed to collect rainwater—slow, hold, manage, filter and infiltrate water and improve water quality. Thus, rainwater becomes more available as groundwater, recharging aquifers, rather than overloading storm sewers, decreasing erosion and water pollution in area streams and ponds. The EPA estimates that pollutants carried by rain water account for 70% of all water pollution. Rain gardens are very effective in filtering out pollutants.

Remember the right plant, right place decree. Consider location, lay of the land, soil type, amount of area feeding water and the size of garden needed. A rain garden should be about 20% the size of the impermeable area draining into it.

Go outside in a rain storm and check out the water flow and runoff in your yard. A rain garden is planted in the lowest part of the identified water catchment area, e.g. the base of a gentle slope. Generally, it’s rectangular shaped with the longer side perpendicular to the slope in order to catch the maximum amount of rainfall. It could be an existing low area or an excavated shallow basin of usually 4-6” or so in depth, but it needs to be one that does drain easily. A small berm may be needed on the downhill edge of the garden to help contain water until it can drain naturally. This could also be an area fed by your downspout(s) or sump pump outlet. Sometimes adding an under drain system, e.g. drain tile, is needed.

Your rain garden should be located no closer than 10 feet from any building foundation. Adding a rain garden can aid in reducing risk of localized flooding e.g. basement flooding.

Soil and infiltration tests are recommended. Add peat, sand, compost to heavy clay soils to increase infiltration.

Rain gardens soak up to 30% more water than conventional lawns. Water should infiltrate or evaporate within 24-48 hours for the health of the plants. Plants for water gardens need to tolerate temporary flooding. Areas that have standing water for four days or more become mosquito breeding grounds.

Select plants that are moisture loving and tolerant drought. Remember, we do live in Kansas. Native plants are a good choice as they adapt well to our climate and soil, are hosts to native butterflies and insects, and provide habitat for various wildlife. Depending on the size of your garden, sedges, or grasses such as little blue stem, native flowers like milkweed, coneflowers, verbena, salvia and shrubs work well. Plants may grow larger than normal as they’re likely to receive increased amounts of moisture. Check out the Kansas Native Plant Society website.

Plant deep to encourage well established root systems. You will need to water and weed regularly especially the first year, but these gardens can become relatively low maintenance. Add compost to improve drainage in compacted soils and increase water retention in fast-draining soils. Shredded mulch is recommended to reduce erosion and conserve moisture.

Other ways to conserve water: collect water in rain barrels, use water from dehumidifiers to water plants, plant drought tolerant plants, group moisture lovers together, and use mulch.

A rain garden is a most aesthetic and effective way to manage inconsistent, unpredictable rainfall in your own backyard.

Resources include
June Insect: The Despised Bagworm

By Lenora Larson

Introduction: Insects are a part of every gardener’s life. Each month you’ll meet a common insect with advice on whether you should eradicate, tolerate or embrace this six-legged visitor. June is the start of Bagworm season, so Lenora is heading off the questions about this despised pest. Please send Lenora your insect requests!

Early to mid-June is the correct time to check your conifers for hanging bags, the homes of the dreaded Evergreen Bagworm. This insect pest dines on leaves of Junipers and over 100 other species of plants, especially Arborvitae and Spruce. Ugly shaggy bags adorn the victim as its nibbled leaf tips turn brown. Even worse, a heavy infestation can kill young and stressed plants. Clearly, this pest is not welcome, and understanding its lifestyle helps plan a successful eradication.

Life Cycle
Life begins as an egg. The caterpillar emerges and immediately begins feeding. After five molts, the full-grown caterpillar pupates and metamorphizes into the reproductive adult stage. Sound familiar? Yes, this is the life cycle of butterflies and moths! The despised Bagworm is a moth, but unique in that all these familiar functions are performed in its bag, which the caterpillar manufactures from silk and bits of the host plant. The eggs snooze through the winter in Mom’s bag and hatch in June. The youngsters scramble out and begin eating and manufacturing their own protective bags. They may remain on Mom’s plant or spin a lifeline of silk and float on the wind to a new host plant.

Bagworm Romance
By mid-July, the caterpillar stops eating and pupates in its bag. Come September, it has metamorphosed into an adult and the winged males emerge from their bag to look for love. However, an adult female has no wings so she’ll remain in her bag, now the bridal suite, as she emits pheromones to attract suitors. After she lays her eggs and dies, the bag becomes her coffin and her children’s nursery. Every female bag left on the tree or on the ground is potentially another 500 to a thousand Bagworms next June. The males die after breeding, so their empty bags are harmless but ugly. Note: at no time does the Bagworm live underground. If you see them crawling up a tree trunk, they are returning home after being accidentally knocked to the ground.

Eradication Strategies
Bagworms have many predators, such as birds that tear the bags open for a winter egg feast. Predatory and parasitoid insects also target Bagworms. But in an epidemic year, nature’s way doesn’t provide adequate control to prevent host plant death. You must take action to save not just the appearance but also the life of affected plants.

Each homeowner will make their own decision about chemical options. Chemicals work only on the feeding caterpillars, so mid-June to mid-July is the window of opportunity. To me, spraying poisons on a large shrub or tree is like dropping a bomb on a city. Yes, a few bad guys are killed, but the collateral damage is unacceptable as thousands of innocent lives are lost. This includes the gorgeous Juniper Hairstreak, the only green butterfly in North America.

First to fifth (mature) instar bags.

A second instar cat pokes its head and shoulders out of its bag, ready to stroll about and eat.

The free-flying adult male comes to lights where you can admire his cute hairy body and clear wings (Photo by Betsy Betros)

This Pfitzer Juniper will need daily debagging for at least two weeks to save its foliage and prevent re-investation next year.

Its caterpillar dines solely on Juniper leaves (the Eastern Red Cedar is really a Juniper, i.e., Juniperus virginiana) without the protection of a bag.

Without chemical intervention, every bag must be collected by hand. These bagged beasties are remarkably resilient and can survive baths of soapy water and incineration. Several hours later, you’ll see the still alive caterpillars, bags at a jaunty upward angle, hiking back to their host plant. I recommend hand-crushing as you pick them. Squeeze until you feel the pop and green goo oozes out. After September’s breeding, most of the bags contain hundreds of eggs, so remove and destroy rather than simply leaving on the tree or ground. I usually preach love and acceptance of insects, but this is war! ✽
### 2019 Marais des Cygnes EMG Advanced Training Calendar

Please note: More trainings will be added throughout the year as they are scheduled.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th># Hrs</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6:30 pm</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Horticulture at the KC Zoo</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6:00 pm</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Insect Friends and Foes</td>
<td>Dr. Ray Cloyd, KSU</td>
<td>Extension Office, Paola</td>
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<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6:30 pm</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Native Host Plants for Butterflies</td>
<td>Lenora Larson, MdC EMG</td>
<td>Extension Office, Paola</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6:30 pm</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>The Healing Garden</td>
<td>Katie Kingery-Page</td>
<td>Kauffman Conference Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Linn County Garden Tour</td>
<td></td>
<td>Linn County</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6:30 pm</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Colorful Foliage for All Seasons</td>
<td>Anne Wildeboor, OP Arboretum</td>
<td>Extension Office, Paola</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6:30 pm</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Gardening for the Birds and Bats</td>
<td>Theresa and Nik Hiremath</td>
<td>Kauffman Conference Center</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6:30 pm</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Soil and Water Quality</td>
<td>Jessica Barnett, JOCO Ext. Ag. Agent</td>
<td>Extension Office, Paola</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6:30 pm</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Compost Is the Answer: What Was the Question?</td>
<td>Stan Slaughter</td>
<td>Extension Office, Paola</td>
</tr>
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**NEWS & NOTES**

- EMGs involved with the Miami County Fair (July 20-27) are asking other EMGs to enter samples of their best efforts in the horticulture and floriculture categories. Check out the fair website at [maraisdescygnes.k-state.edu](http://maraisdescygnes.k-state.edu).
- There will be a workday at the Mound City Extension Office on June 26, 9 am. Contact Sondra Dela Cruz for more information.
- Both the Courthouse and Extension Office gardens are going to be professionally mulched this year, which is an enormous help to those who volunteer to plan, plant, weed, water and beautifully maintain the gardens all season.
- Sue Burns says there are lots of Hairy Balls Tropical Milkweed seedlings in the Extension Office Garden, if anyone wants some.
- A planning meeting for the 5th Annual Gardening By Design Symposium was held on June 17 at the Lighthouse Presbyterian Church in Paola, which is where the Symposium will be held next year. Lenora Larson has once again lined up some very impressive speakers.
- EMG recruiters and staff are doing a great job of finding people interested in signing up for new EMG training this fall. Please let Katelyn, Betsy or Jan know if you know of anyone interested. The deadline for registering is July 8. The registration fee for the training sessions, extensive materials, snacks and lunches is $100, with an additional $25 paid by the MdC EMG program. Applications are on the MdC website.
- Save Thursday, September 5 for the Linn County EMG garden tour. We will carpool and meet at a garden in Linn County TBD. RSVP by July 30 and plan to bring a sack lunch. Advanced Training credit will be given to participating EMGs.
- After doing a fabulous job of chairing this year's very successful plant sale, Sondra Dela Cruz has agreed to chair the 2020 sale. We'll be setting up on Wednesday so sales can start first thing Thursday morning. Let's all help Sondra and Tom again, in as many ways as we can, to ensure another fun and successful plant sale!

Be sure to follow the Marais des Cygnes EMGs on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/mdcemg](http://www.facebook.com/mdcemg)