

The Grapevine

October 2020

The newsletter for Yamhill County Master Gardeners



Oregon State University
Extension Service
Yamhill County

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Extreme Topiary

YCMGA Gardeners:

Many of you are working on MG projects (Community Garden, Demo. Gardens, Greenhouse, Propagation, and more) and we want your photos to put in the *Grapevine*.

Photos add a personal touch to our newsletter, and with all the distancing we need that more than ever. Send your pics to: m42oneb@gmail.com



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PESKY PROFILES

By Heather Stoven



Asian Jumping Worm is Here

On a recent walk with my dog, I came across a writhing worm on the sidewalk ahead of me. I thought this a bit odd considering it was late morning and hadn't rained: normally one wouldn't see worms out in this way. Upon touching the worm it jumped into the air and then squiggled sideways like a snake. I was able to catch the worm and after connecting with the ODA, bring a sample to their Salem office.

Indeed, the worm found has been identified as an Asian jumping worm. Upon further inquiry, I found that we have had another jumping worm identified from McMinnville before. Other Oregon finds include Grants Pass, Portland, Hillsboro, Tigard, Lake Oswego, Canby, West Linn, Corvallis and Salem. Samples from Polk and Lane Counties also are waiting to be identified by specialists, but appear to be jumping worms.

So, you ask, why do I care about this invasive species being found in our region and county? Of course, it is not positive to have a new species without natural enemies to keep their population in check. In the eastern part of the US, where

this pest has been present longer, it has greatly reduced the leaf litter layer in forests. This has reduced water retention, harmed nutrient cycling and soil structure, and has reduced the home of thousands of organisms which live in the layer, which is incredibly diverse.



Asian jumping worm

Your next question to me might be, what can I do? First, as Master Gardeners, we are often on the front lines of identification of new pests, and we have had suspected samples brought into the office before. One major identifier is the whitish band at the front of the body. However, the worm I found did not have a white band; it was very similar in color to the rest of the worm. The behavior, for me, was the major identifying feature – this worm definitely jumped when provoked. After repeated prodding it tired out and no longer jumped as before.

Read the attached document below to find out more about identification. Secondly, as gardeners, we all love plants, right? It is tempting to share plants with friends and neighbors, but with invasive worms in our region, we definitely want to avoid doing this so we do not spread this pest further than it already is.

For more info from the ODA click [HERE](#)



HOW TO IDENTIFY JUMPING WORMS

1) Snake-like behavior
Jumping worms will thrash wildly when handled

2) Clitellum
The clitellum (band near the head) completely encircles the body, is milky white to gray, and smooth to the body (not raised)

3) Body color
Body color varies from reddish brown to dark brown, but skin looks smooth and shiny, almost metallic

Not to be confused with:
Common invasive European species have a raised or saddle-shaped, segmented clitellum

European nightcrawler
Raised clitellum, further from head

Jumping worm
Smooth clitellum, closer to head

NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL IN OREGON

I recently handled an intake in which a landowner wanted to know what could be done about invasive weeds on neighboring property. Unfortunately, the answer is not encouraging.

Because there is such a proliferation of invasive noxious weeds in Oregon, there is very little that any government agency can or will do to control them. Funding is not there for an attempt to control most noxious weeds, so governments focus on only a tiny group of newly-invasive plants which haven't gotten a grip here yet. All the rest (about 100 of them) are no longer interesting to government agencies.



Lesser celandine

In Oregon, there is a list of "T" weeds ("T" signifying "targeted"), a designated group of weed species that are selected and will be the focus for prevention and control by the Noxious Weed Control Program of the Oregon Department of Agriculture. The list is specific by county (as is reasonable). For Yamhill county, the evil ones are **Garlic Mustard** (*Alliaria petiolata*), **Gorse** (*Ulex europaeus*), **Giant Hogweed**, **Yellow Archangel** (*Lamium galeobdolon*), **Lesser celandine** (*Ranunculus ficaria*), and **Bamboo** (Various).

These weeds are the focus of an "Early Detection and Rapid Response" (EDRR) program which is designed to first prevent introduction of these weeds, then perform early detection, and finally implement control measures. With these weeds, YCSWCD will work to eradicate them on public land, and if on private property will, with the permission of the landowner, do the same. However, if the landowner does *not* give permission, nothing further can or will be done.

I find it disappointing that a huge number of damaging and invasive weeds are now on the ODA "B" list of weeds which are predominant here, but for which no organized effort to eradicate them is being made. There are 91 weeds on this list, including such nefarious

characters as blackberry, tansy ragwort, all thistle (7 types), all brooms, all knotweeds (even the infamous Japanese knotweed), ivy, and all St. Johnsworts.

There is also an "A" list of weeds of known economic importance which occur in the state in small enough infestations to make eradication or containment possible; or are not known to occur, but their presence in neighboring states make future occurrence in Oregon seem imminent. These are just waiting offstage to earn a place on the "T" list.

The summary of all this is that there is no federal, state, or county legislation that could be used to require people to rid their property of noxious weeds. (Clackamas County—always the leader in Oregon horticultural issues—actually has a program in which county employees are sent to areas that are at issue, to try to work out a solution among the involved parties). Still, there is no legal "bite" to any of these efforts.

Recommendations from all agencies (federal, Oregon, & county) are that neighbors need to make a strong effort to work together to solve weed problems, because ultimately that is the *only* solution. (The only exception to that is with municipality ordinances which often require cutting of brush and weeds above a certain height. But even that is not an effort to eradicate or control the spread of the weeds, but is only for aesthetics and fire protection).

Summary: The client has only one option if there are noxious weeds on neighboring property—try to negotiate a solution with the neighbor.

For verification of these policies, this is the ODA department to contact:

Noxious Weed Control
635 Capitol St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
Phone: 503-986-4621



Donn Callahan

Heather's Highlights

Heather Stoven

Heather Stoven
OSU Yamhill County Extension
Faculty, Community Agriculture



Hello Master Gardeners!

I hope everyone is doing well and endured the smoke from the wildfires. Being kept indoors was a good reminder to me of how much I love gardening: it was such a challenge to stay indoors and not have the daily stress relief of pulling weeds and walking through the yard.

Within the MG program we are continuing to answer desk clinic questions virtually as well as work in the gardens with limited individuals at once. Many of our committees are meeting regularly, planning for modified events such as the plant sale and Spring into Gardening.

Our insect committee has been putting together

an entertaining monthly newsletter, and you are currently reading our wonderful YCMGA *Grapevine* newsletter! The education committee planned some fun online education earlier this summer and has new events in the works. Lastly, we are also preparing a virtual awards ceremony for this fall, so stay tuned for more information.

I will be also be putting together another plant problem exercise in the future. Many of you stated you enjoyed working on them, which is great!

Thank you again for all your volunteer time: I appreciate all of you! I wish you all a wonderful fall season.



Cynthia, Kelly, & Gail among those keeping the Fairgrounds Demo. Garden looking lush and healthy.

Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago.

YCMGA KEEPING ACTIVE

3RD QUARTER REPORT TO OMGA

The Pandemic has caused a major shift in our Master Gardeners' lives. We have not been able to meet and hold meetings or social events as well as hold our usual activities. It has been quite a burden and all of us have had to learn how to cope with the changes.

YCMGA is continuing to conduct chapter business following the OSU COVID-19 guidelines for the limited in-person activities and utilizing ZOOM for our Educational Outreach and BOD meetings.

The EOC Committee offered a presentation called "**The COVID Garden**" with members presenting gardening projects they have worked on since the pandemic restrictions began. This was a success and was followed up by a presentation entitled,

"Before and After" with members submitting photographs of various gardening projects.

In addition to the webinars available through OSU, Heather Stoven, the Yamhill County Extension Program Coordinator,

presented a tutorial on hydrangeas via Zoom.

While the Yamhill County Fairgrounds are open but without many visitors we decided to **renovate a couple of our Demonstration Garden beds** so they will look better next year. We are also working on improving the soil storage area, moving it outside the greenhouse.

Propagation was farmed out to individuals and put in Grow Alley for sorting and maintaining (watering, fertilizing, pruning, etc.) In mid-June we were advised we could have up to 6 people working on assigned days if all COVID-19 safety measures were taken and we worked outside.

People could come by invitation only and only after certified training and approval by Heather.

We ultimately gathered a pool of 12-14 people we could pull from and decided to have sessions twice a week. Sources were found to supply material for cuttings and we rotated participants so everyone would have a chance to come. We have completed the tasks and have over **7,800 cuttings** many of which we are now transplanting into 4" pots. We have maintained the cohesiveness and enthusiasm of our groups in addition to training several new members.

The **Garden-to-Table** classes have been temporarily suspended due to the coronavirus epidemic. New classes will resume in the early fall of 2020 or spring 2021 depending on when the risk of the virus infection subsides.

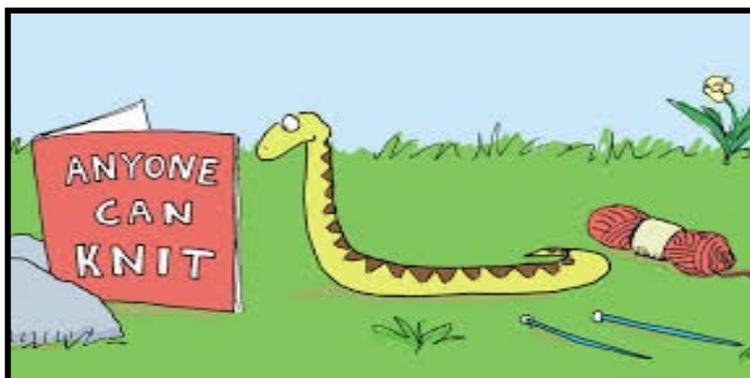
McMinnville Community Garden: As of August 25th volunteers have harvested 7,708 lbs. of vegetables for the Food Bank.

It is our wish that other chapters may have come up with ideas that we can all share to help make this time more enjoyable.



Polly Blum

Yamhill County OMGA representative



The Story of Phosphorus

When Hennig Brand lugged a final, sloshing pail of yellow urine over the cobblestones of a Hamburg street and down to a basement where he'd patiently collected 1,500 gallons of his neighbors' pee in pots and tubs, the putrid stockpile represented one of the greatest leap forwards in agricultural history—albeit propelled by accident.

Brand was a German alchemist and hoped to make physical gold from his neighbors' figurative gold. For several weeks in 1669, Brand boiled away the fetid urine brew, leaving behind a pasty, glow-in-the-dark prize—phosphorus.

As the 11th most abundant mineral on the planet, phosphorus is a ubiquitous component of everything from DNA to teeth, but its agricultural fertilizer source, rock phosphate, is a limited resource.

Three-hundred and fifty years after Brand stared in wonder at white residue distilled from neighborhood discharge, phosphorus remains surrounded by questions.

Most mined phosphorus is used in fertilizer, with the remainder of mined phosphate rock used in industrial application, mainly in the production of glyphosate.

Plants cannot live by nitrogen alone. Phosphorus is the backbone of the biological membranes holding plant cells together, and its absence is often the culprit of hidden hunger in crops. The yellowing foliage of nitrogen deficiency is telltale and easily noted by a farmer, but phosphorus deficiency, evidenced by slow growth, is nuanced and initially far more difficult to detect.

Jay Goos of North Dakota State University emphasizes phosphate-related tasks ahead: "There is no substitute for phosphorus in agriculture, or indeed in life. Phosphate rock is a finite resource – at some point in time the earth's supply may be exhausted. There should be a global effort to develop more effective phosphate rock mining and processing technologies and to utilize phosphate fertilizer, other phosphate-based products and phosphate-containing waste as efficiently as possible, while keeping unused nutrients out of watersheds and the oceans." (Over-application of manure to fields can cause excessive phosphorus in the soil).

North Dakota, like many Great Plains

states, houses a surreal, but revealing, story of phosphate loss. Buffalo bones once lay scattered by the millions across the Great Plains, echoes of astoundingly expansive bison herds. The bones became fodder for multiple industries, and were used in sugar refinement, dry lubrication, bone China, and fertilizer production. (Bone contains roughly 15% phosphate).

During the height of the buffalo bone trade, 1880-1892, as settlers spread across North Dakota and often had no income source beyond meager crops, they grabbed a lifeline as bone collectors. Sold between \$5-20 per ton, millions of tons of bones were gathered by the wagonloads across the Plains states and hauled to railheads, bound for the grind of East Coast factories.

Another point in the North Dakota phosphate situation is that the deep 2'-3' of black topsoil present in 1880, and which was lost largely through wind erosion since the prairies were first plowed, contained the equivalent of over 200 years of phosphate application at today's typical fertilizer rates in the state. After all this waste, we now farm phosphate-depleted soil.

"Nitrogen gets all the headlines," Goos concludes, "but someday phosphorus will be of equal importance. I don't think it will be too long and we'll all be talking about phosphorus."

This is a condensation of *part* of an article in *Farm Journal* magazine, September 2020. The article discusses "peak phosphate:" for the entire article, go to the link below.

[phosphorus-time-bomb-agriculture-myth-and-reality](#)



Donn Callaham



State Historical Society of North Dakota

Buffalo bones tell an astounding side story of phosphate history. (*Digital Horizons*)



Initial layout by Tom



Finished bin (except for discreet tarp to be added)



Soil bin construction at the YCMGA greenhouse (Yamhill County Fairgrounds).



Practicing for work on a road crew



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The Grapevine

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