



Hoosier Organic Gardener

October 2023

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.

President's Message

October greetings to all.

So far fall isn't too bad, weather wise. I hope it stays that way for the 21th of October meeting at Susan's. My garden is sort of a 50-50 garden this year. Some things did great and others actually died on the vine. Most of my problems are always lack of good sunlight as my two large trees along with the neighbor's River Birch shade out a lot of the light. For some strange reason, my tomatoes that I felt were looking pretty bad, sprung to life after a very large bucket of compost, and now are looking amazingly good.



Doug Rohde

The chipmunks have been vanquished or lying low but they seem to have given up the attack. The pesky squirrels are now burying hickory nuts after pigging out, high in the tree, for weeks. They do the main digging in the fall and dig everywhere and in the spring will be re-digging to find the buried fall nuts and cause the same disturbance they did in the fall. My brother reported that the squirrels ate most of the tomatoes in the garden and only those in pots, close to the house, escaped.....so far.

Now to the October, 21st meeting.....

Here are the positions that will be open: The president's position, the vice-president's and the secretary position. As I stated in the last issue, Judy will continue with editing of the Hoosier Organic Gardener quarterly newsletter. She will also continue managing our web site. So the secretary position (modified) will need someone to take good meeting notes and mail to Judy. Also if we don't have anyone that will photograph the meeting, the secretary needs to take the photos too. However, if someone would volunteer to be the photographer (it has to be done with an iPhone because camera photos are much harder to upload into the newsletter) that is just how it has to be done to make constructing the newsletter together far easier as Judy has to maneuver the photos as well as articles around to make them fit the pages.

The vice-president is responsible for finding places for us to visit in July and October, preferably gardens that are organic and for finding speakers for January. Margaret has some health issues to get solved so she is not going to run for the position. January and April are pretty well locked in to Cool Creek Park as the cold

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weather and space for the plant sale sort of dictate those needs. I got us out of libraries and so far, Cool Creek likes us and supports us very well....and doesn't charge! However, the January and April dates need to be locked in very early so we don't end up with the Tortoise again plus Cool Creek Park has been designated as a voting building so we have to manage those two dates as well.

The president's position needs someone who writes the "President's Message", (not hard) coordinates with the other staffers and members, solves problems when necessary and has to make those decisions necessary to keep the organization afloat. Fairly straight forward position, again, we only meet 4 times a year so it's not like the president of the Master Gardeners who meet almost every month with a membership of over 300+ members and regulated by a major university.

Larry and Steve will be running for their current positions and, as stated above, Judy will continue to take care of the newsletter, web site overview and a few other things but not running for secretary.

So please put your name in the hat and run for the offices, technically all of them are open of course but we need to have them filled to keep IOGA running properly. I, along with Margaret, Larry and Steve will normally be attending the meetings.

I also want to especially thank Margaret, Larry, Steve and Judy for their great work and loyalty they have always done for IOGA. We have carried Ron and Claudia's torch well and even though we've lost members (Covid really hurt) we persevere and mush along pretty well. Let's continue.....

I'm looking forward to see everyone at Susan's in October (and thank you Susan for hosting!). For those of you who haven't seen Susan's garden and potting shed make sure you attend October's meeting as you will enjoy it.

Keep IOGA organic!
Doug

Beans



Calypso (yin-yang) beans have been in my bean pot for a number of years. The smell of cooking beans is offensive to Annie but calypsos have a milder aroma and she can tolerate that. The trade off is that they are less flavorful than pintos. This year I branched out, planting three other kinds of beans, Lina Cisco's Bird Egg beans, Yellow Indian Woman beans, and Mayflower beans.

Since they were planted first, and are a bush bean, the bird egg beans reached maturity first. They are a good producer, probably averaging over four beans per pod. There were some short ones, but many with five and sixes weren't uncommon. Calypsos have a tendency to stain brown in the shell, a problem not seen in the bird eggs. When good rains came in late July and early August, the beans, about done with their production, set on new growth and blooms, so as I picked the dried shells, new beans were growing. At end of season I got a few more for a total of 1 lb 14 oz. from two 10 ft rows.

The now somewhat rare Yellow Indian Woman beans went in next. A pole bean, they topped my six foot trellis and spilled over. I got a small packet at the Mother Earth Fair, then found a source for a one-pound bag. After eating half, there were plenty of seeds left for four 10 ft rows. They are very good.

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The first picking of dried beans were nice and plump, but the really hot weather hit and later pickings became smaller and there were more shriveled beans. They produced lots of 4 and 5 bean pods, and even a few sixes, but the count per pod probably averaged slightly fewer than the Bird Egg beans. Total harvest 5 lb, 12 ½ oz.

The last planted were Mayflower beans. I had planted some two years ago among the bushel and luffah gourds to share their trellis. They were soon overrun. I planted some this year around a round re-mesh trellis. The fourteen plants that came up topped the ten foot trellis. They produced the lowest per pod seed count, with mostly two and three bean pods. The Mayflower harvest amounted to 8.9 oz.

Extrapolating to make an even comparison, I was surprised to find the Mayflowers produced more per unit of row than the Bird Egg beans but the short pods are discouraging. The Indian Woman beans were the star performers.

Corn Earworms

I Plant, I Fight, I Conquer

Corn earworms weren't a problem in Indiana. I assumed the pesticide drench and GMO had nearly eradicated them. Not so in Kansas.

I once heard a man hawking his sweet corn at a farmers market guaranteeing a worm in every ear. I'm sure I could have made the same guarantee for the last 5 years and never had to pay off. Apparently, the earworm moths fly grid patterns over the land with surveillance equipment, and when they pass over a sweet corn patch, their screens flash fluorescent green and bells and whistles go off.

I have sprayed the silks numerous times in the past with BT and pyrethrin, and produced a fine crop of worms that my chickens enjoyed. But I would rather feed me than them.

This year, in a test to see if the moths located corn by smell, I put smelly stuff from the garden, garlic and dill, in the garden blender. I added more water, then strained the mix into a garden sprayer. I may have added some BT just for luck. I felt the stinky mess should turn away anything, especially after it sat in the heat of the shop building for several days.

Since the moths are nocturnal, I sprayed the corn patch every evening except the week we were gone, all over the stalks but especially the silks.

I harvested a bucket full today, and in 25 ears, there was not one worm.

Paul Matzak

8 Pesticide Myths Every Gardener Should Know

1. *Pesticides only kill pests; they don't harm beneficial insects.*"

Reality: Most backyard pesticides treatments do NOT differentiate between harm to specific pests and harm to beneficial insects.

2. *Something is eating my plants. They're going to die! I need to do something.*"

Reality: Plants are resilient, especially native plants living in the right conditions.

3. *"I sprayed pesticides a while ago, but it shouldn't be a problem for pollinators anymore."*

Reality: Some pesticides can remain in the environment for days, weeks, or even months or years even. If you sprayed pesticides in the past, residues may still be present on the plants, in the soil or on nearby surfaces. Pollinators that come into contact with these residues can still be exposed and affected.

4. *"If I can buy it, it must be safe."*

Reality: There are several pitfalls in the pesticide approval process. When the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) decides whether to approve a pesticide, it weighs the risks to humans or non-target wildlife against the potential economic benefits of its use.

5. *Natural or organic pesticides are always safe. Just spray neem oil!*"

Reality: While natural or organic pesticides generally have lower environmental impacts than their synthetic counterparts, they can still be toxic to beneficial insects. Neem oil, a naturally occurring pesticide extracted from the seeds of the neem tree, has many active components and can affect beneficial larvae of butterflies. Caution with organic pesticides can minimize harm to beneficial insects.

6. *My mosquito spray is derived from chrysanthemum flowers.*"

Reality: Pest control companies can mislead consumers who are concerned about the environment into thinking that their conventional products for mosquito and tick control are botanical insecticides derived from chrysanthemum flowers. They are more persistent in the environment and more toxic to insects.

7. *"Only insecticides harm pollinators; herbicides and fungicides are safe."*

Reality: While insecticides are often the primary concern when considering pollinator safety, herbicides and fungicides can also pose risks. Herbicides can eliminate flowering plants that provide essential food sources for pollinators and they indirectly affect pollinators by altering the nutritional composition or abundance of floral resources. Fungicides can also cause subtle but significant harm, making bees more susceptible to pathogens .

8. *"Pesticides solve pest problems. They're the cheapest and easiest way to get rid of pests."*

Reality: Pesticides are often treating the symptoms of an underlying issue, rather than solving the root issue. Pesticides are costly from both an economic and environmental standpoint, and there are many other options to consider before choosing a pesticide. Given the potential for harm, pesticides should be used as a last resort only when other methods have failed and there is a significant risk to health or property.

Thanks to Emily May, Xerces Society's Pollinator Conservation Specialist for this article. I did modify it a bit for the newsletter.

Submitted by Doug Rohde

Powdery Mildew

One of the occurring things certain plants in my garden always get in the fall is Powdery Mildew (Erysiphaceae). So, here's a bit of information if any of you get it in your garden too.

Mildew is a fungus of the type called an "obligate parasite" because it feeds on living plants. When moisture conditions are just right, wind-carried spore (little seeds) resting on a plants leaves send out germ tubes, which grow into white threads (mycelia). These branch over the leaves in a white, soft, felty coating.

This type of fungus does not grow inside the plant, but sends its little suckers into the plant's sap. As chains are built up from the mycelium spore, the plant becomes covered in a few days. Eventually black fruiting bodies with the sexual or "overwintering" spores are formed.

Because it is on the surface, mildew is more easily controlled than many other fungi and horsetail tea is an excellent spray to use. During the season when green plants are available, it is also good to prepare an extract by covering freshly picked plants with water. Allow them to ferment for about 10 days, then dilute the liquid and use it as a spray in the same way as the tea. Mustard seed flour or sulphur dust also may be used, while polybutenes, oil derivatives have been used successfully to control powdery mildew on cucurbits.

Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*):

The horsetails are the last remainder of the large trees of the carboniferous forests. The most common is the field horsetail, which grows in sandy and gravelly soils on a high ground-water level.

Horsetail looks like a tiny Christmas tree and sometimes is called meadow pine. The hollow-branched, jointed stems range from two to three feet tall. The plant does not produce flowers or seeds but sends up fertile spore-bearing stems resembling catkins. These are covered with powdery brown spores. After the spores drop, small green shoots emerge from the ground. The perennial horsetail has a rootstock that bears tuberous growths that store available carbohydrate against a future need.

A tea made of horsetail is very effective against mildew and other fungi found on fruit trees, grapevines, vegetables, and roses. It is a gentle but swift action and does not disturb soil life. Silica-rich plants are valuable on the compost pile too.

The parts used are the dried leaves and stems of the plant. Boil 2 or 3 teaspoons of the crumbled herb to a cup of water for 20 minutes. Or soak the leaves in water for several hours, boil for 10 minutes, and steep for another 10. It can be purchased at jpibiodynamics.org — BD#508.

Made into a spray, it is particularly useful against powdery fungus and curly leaf on peach trees. It also controls mildew on roses, vegetables, grapes, and stone fruits and it has been found to have a cell-strengthening action on the plants sprayed with it.

From "Carrots love Tomatoes" by Louise Riotte.

Doug

Winter Cover

If you have only enough garden space to grow the vegetables you need every year, then obviously you can't devote half that space to a legume that demands a full growing season. That's when you should choose a winter legume like sweet clover or a grain like rye to plant in the fall after your vegetables are harvested. Mulching with leaves or hay over winter won't give soils nearly the same boost that green manuring does. And thick mulches will take longer to break down in the spring than green manure crops, which could delay your early spring plantings. If you leave the ground bare in the fall, nutrients like nitrogen, calcium and potash will be leached out by rain. Cover crops that grow fast in cool weather quickly absorb the most easily leached nutrients and hold them safely until spring. When you till/hoe them under in spring, the nutrients are released for your vegetables.

Winter rye (what I use) is the old standard green manure and cover crop to plant in the fall (Habig Nursery, across from Whole Foods on 82nd Street, sells it by the pound). In truth, winter wheat and barley can also be sown, but rye is used more frequently because it is the hardiest of all winter grains. Rye has an amazing tolerance for cold weather...seeds can germinate when the thermometer reads only 33 degrees F., and the plant can grow in the fall until the temperature drops below 40 degrees F. It resumes growth when the temperature rises to 40 degrees F. in the spring. Rye can survive a bristling 40 below zero in the dead of winter.

Rye can be established later than wheat and starts to grow earlier in the spring. It can be planted anytime from August up to mid-October in the North and even later farther South. Planting rye in late sweet corn is an excellent strategy. After frost kills the corn, the rye still has about a month or six weeks when it can grow and cover the ground.

Several legumes can also be planted in the fall. The other choices are the sweet clovers. And the best sweet clover is common white clover because it is so winter hardy. Hairy vetch is hardy, too. One of the side benefits of vetch is that by planting it as a fall cover, your soil will benefit from the additional 80 pounds of nitrogen per acre that the legume "fixes." And that can only help next year's crops. Crimson clover is another good cover crop during the winter months (handed out free at the Noblesville Soil and Water Conservation building on Pleasant Street...I'm also trying that too.) You can turn it under like rye in the spring.

Doug

Upcoming Meetings

IOGA generally meets quarterly on the third Saturday of the month.

Mark your calendar for upcoming meetings.

October 21, 2023
January 20, 2024



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Treasurer's Report 3rd Quarter 2023



Opening Balance July 1, 2023 \$5,076.20

Expenses	
Newsletter	108.48
Total	\$108.48

Closing Balance September 30, 2023 \$4,967.72

Respectfully submitted by Larry Bills, Treasurer

July IOGA Meeting Canceled Due to Weather

The July meeting at Sobremesa Farm was canceled due to predicted storm activity.

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, make your check out to Indiana Organic Growers Association and mail to:

I.O.G.A.
7159 W 200 N
Tipton, IN 46072-8637



Please include ALL of the following information:

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

I prefer my newsletter to be ___ e-mailed ___ mailed.

IOGA
Meeting
Sat. Oct. 21

Susan Irwin-Simmon's Garden
9054 W County Road 575 N.
Middletown, IN 47356 ([Map](#))

11:00—12:00	Pitch-in Lunch
12:00—1:00	Introductions, Q&A, and Business/Election
1:00	Tour

SoMeeting: The October 21 IOGA meeting will be a visit to the garden of Susan Irwin-Simmons east of Pendleton. Susan lives on 6 1/2 acres, has an enclosed garden, and a beautiful potting shed/house. She uses raised beds in her garden, grows fruit trees, and raises chickens.

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

Directions: From I-465 take I-69 North from Indianapolis 26.3 miles to exit 226. At exit 226 take the ramp right and turn right (south) onto IN-109. On IN-109 go 3.5 miles and turn left (east) onto US-36, On US-36 go 4.3 miles and turn left (north) onto Mechanicsburg Rd. On Mechanicsburg Rd. go 0.8 miles and turn left onto W County Road 575 N. Then go 384 feet to destination on the right. Park in the driveway by the house, down by the barn, or on the road.

Everyone welcome! Questions, or if lost, call Margaret Smith cell phone (317) 698-0526.

.Remember to car pool, if possible.

Join us and bring a friend!



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