



Hoosier Organic Gardener

July, 2020

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



Doug Rohde

I hope this finds all of you in good health and avoiding Covid-19 by continuing to practice safe shopping and social distancing. I've been fairly disciplined with myself as far as wearing my mask and avoiding crowds at all costs and staying home...for the most part. I'm home tending the best weed free garden that I've had in a long time, fighting with a plague of chipmunks that tunneled under my one raised bed and ate the first 3 plantings of red beets and bush beans. Subterranean eating I call it. Then throw in my eternal friends the chiggers that have taken up residence in the garden a long time ago. But I will win as the chipmunks have two choices: the Havaheart trap or the two rat traps. The first choice gets the lucky one a trip to a local nature park about 6 miles away and the other choice (a bit messy) gets one off to chipmunk heaven and a late night snack for the local prowling raccoons on the other side of my fence. I always lose with the chiggers unless I spray myself completely then smell chemically or sickly sweet for a long period.

My tomatoes are growing very well. I piled compost all around their bases and plant carrots in that...according to "Carrots love Tomatoes" by Louise Riotte as I mentioned in the April newsletter. I also bought four bright red tomato cages at Habig Nursery, strong steel ones, a bit expensive though. I straightened out 4 of my old cages, sprayed them with primer, then sprayed them bright red, far cheaper. They look neat housing the green tomato vegetation. I have two rows of onions that are also doing well (chipmunks didn't like them). I've also been repairing my small Mantis tiller. New carburetor and fuel lines (You Tube explained how to easily do it) and now it runs flawlessly. I also got some aerator tines and a sidewalk edger for it so another really great garden tool made even more versatile. If you have been considering a tiller, a Mantis is small and powerful plus it really works up a garden bed or a raised bed!

My 15'x15' mini-prairie was invaded by Goldenrod last and again this year. It's a wonderful and necessary native plant but very invasive. I was busy pulling all of it up last week. Fortunately it pulls out easily after the rain. I've been trying to get a North Carolina Wren to nest in a special box I made for them. Unfortunately a pair of House Wrens always gets in first every year. When I take the kitchen veggies out to the nearby compost bin I get chewed out by mother Wren. The squirrels

were digging in all of our planted pots so I had to cut some 1/4" wire to fit over some of the pots. That stopped them fairly well. I also had to build two poultry wired fences over the raised bed as the squirrels were in that too. Squirrels on top and chipmunks underneath. When you live a half a block from a woods critters naturally look upon your garden as their own smorgasbord.

So since we've been sequestered for the last several months I've been hiking in various forest preserves, riding my bike and almost living on the patio and garden. Barnes and Noble was a great help as one could order a book and have it brought outside to your car since B and N was not open for entering. Catching up on reading was also preserving ones sanity and made everyone realize how dependent we all are on socializing. A few great books for you to check out in the newly opened libraries or order at good old B & N *Nature's Best Hope* by Douglas Tallamy, *The Pollinator Victory Garden* by Kim Eierman, *The Midwestern Native Garden* by Charlotte Adelman and Bernard Schwartz (a really necessary book to have), and *Attracting Beneficial Bugs* by Jessica Walliser and finally *The Veggie Gardener's Answer Book* by Barbara Ellis. A great internet garden source is: A Way To Garden.com one of my favorites!

This just in....since we cancelled our July meeting at the Teter Organic Farm some time ago, Susan just sent a message asking if we would like to have our meeting at her house/garden. I think that's a really good alternative for our July meeting and since we don't know what the Covid-19 will be doing in October, an IOGA meeting at Susan's would be great! Some changes however: you have to bring your own chairs and "brown bag" your lunch, have and wear your mask while inside of Susan's garage and maintain social distancing within reason. Susan said that she could make some lemonade and possibly cookies. At least we could get in some masked gardening discussions and see Susan's fantastic garden.

Keep IOGA organic,

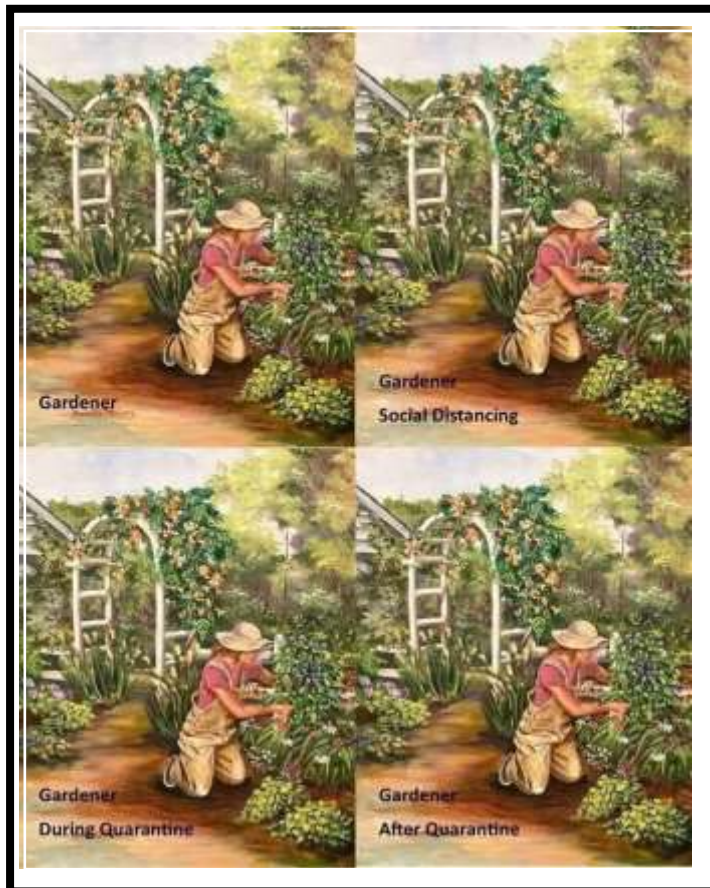
Doug

April IOGA Plant Sale and Meeting was canceled due to COVID-19.

The plant sale is IOGA's only fundraising event. More importantly, members were denied the pleasure of purchasing organic plants contributed by IOGA's members.

The July meeting scheduled at Teter Organic Farm was also canceled. As an alternative, IOGA members will meet at Susan Irwin-Simmons. There will be no pitch-in lunch, but her garden will be open for a tour. See last page for details.

Maybe by October, we can get back to having our normal meeting. Meanwhile we have gardens to tend to and hopefully a bounty of vegetables to harvest.



Don't Let Sap-sucking Squash Bugs Get Old

September, 2019

Squash bugs can be a persistent pest on all of the cucurbits, but especially on squash and pumpkins. This pest overwinters as adults in crop residue or nearby weeds, then fly to fields and gardens when the vines begin to “run.” After mating, they lay their eggs on the cucurbit leaves. Both the wingless nymphs and adults suck plant sap from leaves, vines, and fruit, presenting a challenge through most of the growing season. Their saliva contains plant toxins, resulting in black and crispy leaves near feeding sites. The plant wilts and may eventually die. In the late season, squash bugs may feed on the fruit, causing the fruit to collapse.

Sanitation to remove overwintering adults and control of the young nymphs are key to staying ahead of the problem. Scout the plants beginning early in the growing season and hand remove egg clusters as soon as you see them (see photo 1). A pyrethroid containing insecticide can provide some control of young nymphs. For organic growers, pyrethrum, neem, or a product that contains both can offer good control, but applications need to target young nymphs. Organic insecticides are not effective at controlling adults. Removal of crop debris and weeds at the end of the season will reduce next year's population.



Squash bug adult and egg cluster



Squash bug and early stage

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Did you know that you can give back to IOGA every time you shop on Amazon? Select the Indiana Organic Gardeners Association (IOGA) as your AmazonSmile charitable organization, and Amazon will donate 0.5 percent of every eligible purchase. smile.amazon.com

Orach

By: Paul Matzek

I tried something new this year-new for me that is. Its actually ancient, one of the first crops cultivated by man. The first recorded use appeared in fourteenth century literature. Orach or orache (ar-rich) is in the amaranth family along with spinach. It was once widely grown. It is not known why spinach took its place in our gardens, but it is making a comeback. It has a longer harvest season than spinach.

Knowing nothing of its background, I selected purple orach. Due to my impatience as much as anything, it seemed to take a long time to come up and grow, but it was suddenly 4-5 inches tall. I tentatively chewed a leaf and found it very spinach-like, assuaging my fears it would be very spicy or bitter. This variety is a deep, coleus red color, a delightful splash of color in an otherwise dull green salad. Now I'm impatiently waiting for it to grow more, and I planted another row of it.



After my sample I researched what I had eaten. Orach is rich in vitamin C, vitamin K, calcium, magnesium, phosphorous, iron, anthocyanins, zinc, selenium, tryptophan, carotenes, protein, and dietary fiber. What a powerhouse. Orach aids digestion, improves kidney function, boosts metabolism, boosts the immune system, and has anti-cancer potential. More in-depth information about these benefits can be found at <https://www.organicfacts.net/health-benefits/vegetable/orach.html>.

A couple words of caution. Orach contains oxalis, though not as much as spinach. As such, those who suffer from kidney stones, gall stones, or gout should not eat orach.

Paul and Annie Matzek are IOGA members formerly living in Elizabeth, Indiana, now residing in Meriden, Kansas.

A short list of books that I enjoyed reading

Grow the Good Life - Why a vegetable garden will make you happy, healthy, wealthy and wise by Michele Owens. While not specifically about organic gardening, the author presents good arguments for growing your own vegetables.

Talking Dirt by Annie Spiegelman. A down-to-earth guide to organic gardening.

Grow More with Less—sustainable garden methods, less water, less work, less money by Vincent A. Simeone.

Weeding Without Chemicals by Bob Flowerdew. How to simply and easily control weeds and how to do so with little effort, ecological intrusion or cost.

Composting by Bob Flowerdew. Composting basics from history to using.

Judy Houser

Collecting and Saving Seeds

By Margaret Smith

Something I have enjoyed doing with my organic garden is collecting and saving seeds in the fall-and I have met with good success. The plants from which I have saved seeds include tomatoes, lettuce, squash, peppers, cucumbers and flowers. The plants that result the following year almost always breed true-and germination is nearly 100%.

Tomato seeds can be collected anytime from a choice tomato that you might be preparing to eat. Simply separate out several seeds, put them in a fine mesh strainer, and run cool water over them to eliminate most of the gelatinous seed covering. Then spread the seeds so none are touching on a piece of wax paper and allow to dry for several days. When the seeds are completely dry, gently pry them loose with a finger nail, put them in an envelope, and store them in a moderately cool and dry place. I store my seeds in a cardboard box on the top shelf of my linen closet, adding a few desiccant packets that are sometimes included with various products such as shoes.



Cucumber seeds can be collected in much the same way as tomato seeds, as can pepper seeds, but there is no need to rinse them. Just spread the seeds out on wax paper and let them dry for several days before storing in envelopes.

In late summer, lettuce seeds are so easy to save from any type of leaf lettuce. Just let the lettuce plants grow up and go to seed. Then on a dry day when it has not rained for awhile, break off the tops of the plants. Working over a spread out newspaper on a table, crush the seed heads, each containing many tiny seeds, and let them collect on the paper. Then using a small square of paper as a "shovel," scoop up the seeds and put them in an envelope. It is okay if the chaff gets mixed in with the seeds.

Seeds from all types of squash can be collected when you are preparing a squash to eat. Rinse the seeds well and spread on wax paper to dry for several days before storing in envelopes. However, I have had trouble getting dry [zucchetta squash](#) seeds to germinate. So each fall I keep one very mature zucchetta through the winter. In the spring I will go ahead and eat it, spreading the seeds on the garden with very good results.

Since I love to have colorful flowers in my garden, I collect seeds from zinnia, marigold, tithonia, and coxcomb. In late fall, again on a dry day, I collect the flower heads but leave them intact. I take a sheet of newspaper for each flower type, put the seeds heads in the center, and fold the paper around them. This creates sort of a loose envelope which I staple shut. The newspaper absorbs any moisture that might still be in the flower heads. Then in late May of the following year I break up the flower heads and scatter the seeds thickly in loose soil, cover lightly, and water well. Within a few weeks I have flowers galore.

So if you haven't done much seed collecting before, you may want to start doing it. It is so easy-and costs nothing! Since you are an organic gardener, the seeds you collect should be organic too.

Margaret Smith is an IOGA member living in Indianaplis, Indiana.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Mark your calendar

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

July 18, 2020 — Susan Irwin-Simmon's home
October 17, 2020 — TBD



DANDELION JELLY

Ingredients

2 cups of just yellow part of dandelion
1/2 cup lemon juice
4 cups sugar



Directions

Boil two and a half cups of water, pour over yellow dandelions.
Let steep 24 hours in refrigerator. Strain dandelions. Add extra
water if needed to make 3 1/2 cups of dandelion juice.

Add:

1/2 cup lemon juice
4 cups of sugar

Bring to rolling boil about 10 minutes.

Add 1 package of liquid Certo. Boil 2-3 more minutes. Pour in jars (about eight).

Water bath 10 minutes.

I think getting dandelions was the hardest part. One day the girls can do this for me. I just take scissors about and cut them but I pick out green because it's bitter, a little won't hurt. And try to get dandelions that are not close to road or animals peeing lol

Submitted by Janet Poore

Ask us...!



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Treasurer's Report 2nd Quarter 2020



Opening Balance April 1, 2020 \$7,202.09

Income

Membership Dues	20.00
<u>Amazon</u>	<u>5.00</u>
Total	\$25.00

Expenses

Liability Insurance	200.00
Newsletter Expenses	85.50
WEB Plan	199.56
<u>Domain Registration</u>	<u>131.00</u>
Total	\$612.02

Closing Balance June 30, 2020 \$6,611.03

Respectfully submitted by Larry Bills, Treasurer

New IOGA Member

Oakley J. Molinaro



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: 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 _____
 Phone Number _____
 Email Address _____

I prefer my newsletter to be _____ emailed _____ mailed.

IOGA
Meeting
Sat. July, 18
11:00 am

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

11:00	Arrive and Welcome Guests
11:15—12:00	Lunch
12:00—1:00	Introductions & Gardening Q&A
1:00—1:15	Business Meeting
1:15	Garden Tour

Meeting: The July 18 IOGA meeting will be a visit to the garden of Susan Irwin-Simmons east of Pendelton. 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. Bring your own chair.

Lunch: Bring your own food, plate, fork, and drink.

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. (For precise directions and time of travel from your home, click the word "**Map**" above, then "**Directions**" in the upper left part of the web page, enter your home address, and click the "**Go Button**".)

Wearing a mask and social distancing strongly encouraged.

Please text Susan at 317-408-9434 and let her know if you are coming.

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



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