



Hoosier Organic Gardener

October 2022

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

Here we are again, Indiana's great, long fall. I just got back from Virginia and the first three days were great. but then hurricane IAN's residual weather moved up the East coast and it became rainy and chilly. As we drove back toward Indianapolis four days later, it became sunny and warmer.

My garden(s) had mixed results this year. The zucchini did well in the semi-shade, but the plants never seem to last too long. I over planted the pepper plants with two types and they took over the large raised bed so we'll be eating green, yellow and red peppers and giving some to the neighbors.

Everything did well EXCEPT my favorites the tomatoes. They were growing well, were transplanted properly and growing up with no problems. They bloomed and were bearing nice tomatoes and then the leaves suddenly started to turn yellow, then brown and the plants began to lose their leaves. That was the beginning of the end as they all succumbed to whatever disease they had. Even the two plants on the other side of the house came down with the same leaf dropping and dying. Don't know exactly what it was, but I never had anything like that before. I removed all the plants when I figured out they had some disease, did NOT put them into my compost bin but into the trash bin. So now I don't know if the disease remains in the soil or was just some airborne one. I'm figuring it was some sort of airborne one as last year I had a real decent tomato harvest at the same place in my garden area.

The war on chipmunks continues and I sure have thinned the population (or so I think) and reached the conclusion that rat traps with peanut butter are the most effective and I feed the local coyotes, raccoons and foxes. Recycling I think of it. I still set out the Havaheart chipmunk trap and if it makes the lucky choice, it gets a free ride to a local forest about 5 miles away to lead a real chipmunk life, not one of the spoiled, under the bird feeder, suburban type.

I thought we had a good IOGA year last year. We went to some interesting places, had a good plant auction and almost have recovered from Covid-19, except for our membership. Covid really knocked the membership down and we aren't recovering very fast. That is sort of a worry point for me. So bring a friend, talk IOGA up and hopefully the membership can grow more. Of course, thinking back some years, IOGA and the Master Gardeners were more or less the two main shows in town then gardening clubs started popping up all over and everyone and their mother started having Spring plant sales.



Doug Rohde

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One of the great garden things this year was that I had no ground nesting bees to contend with. I have a friend in the Hamilton County Master Gardeners who got into some ground nesting bees and really got stung up. It sounded like hers was far more worse than mine was last year. She said that they didn't bother her normally, only when she watered which was the same as with mine. As long as I walked past the hole or got out a small stool, as I did later and watched them. As long as I didn't water near their nest hole, everything was peaceful, but priting water in or close to the hole caused an attack. I wondered what they did when it rained.

I also have a lot of native flowers growing and my Virginia Asters are really blooming fantastically now. My Joe Pye weed also did well and attracted some large Monarchs. I planted about 8 sunflowers but only 2 survived. Squirrels I suspect chewed off the tops when they smelled the seeds.

Try to attend our 15 October meeting at Sobremesa Farm as I think it will be another interesting one. Thanks Margaret for finding neat places to visit. Bring a friend!

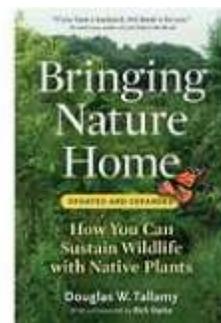
Keep IOGA organic!
Doug



One of my favorite authors (as many other gardeners) is Douglas W. Tallamy.

The three highly recommended books are:

1. Bringing Nature Home
How you can sustain wildlife with native plants
2. Nature's Best Hope
A new approach to conservation that starts in your yard
3. The Nature of Oaks
(A neat book on Oak trees by the month for a year...real interesting)



“The water from a 2-inch downpour-more than 54,000 gallons per acre-is captured almost entirely by an oak forest's leaf litter and the organic humus it creates. Litter and humus don't hold this water indefinitely, but they do corral it on-site just long enough for it to seep into the ground, replenishing the water table on which so many of us depend. In areas with no leaf litter, the same 2-inch rainstorm causes a flood.”

Doug Tallamy, PhD

The *Smithsonian* had an interesting interview with Doug Tallamy which can be found here <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/meet-ecologist-who-wants-unleash-wild-backyard-180974372/>

Doug

Welcome Fall



IOGA Meeting Minutes

July 16, 2022

The meeting on July 16, 2022 was held at Minnetrista in Muncie, Indiana. There were 11 members and 1 guests present.

Members arrived at the Rose Garden starting at 11:00. Parking was complicated by the Farmer's Market occurring that morning. We sat at 2 round tables under umbrellas. Lunch began around 11:30. Nine stayed for the tour while one member and guest went with Susan to see her gardens.

At 1:00 we met at the Center Building. The tour was led by James Edwards, Horticulture Manager at Minnetrista Gardens. He has 2 paid assistants and some volunteer help. Minnetrista is open to the public at no cost except for some special exhibits.

After James spoke about Minnetrista, we started with a tour of the Rose Garden. In the garden is an 8 piece wrought iron gazebo which had won 1st place in the category "Best Cast Iron Work of Art" at the 1939 World's Fair in New York. It was purchased by Mr. & Mrs. William H. Ball and placed in their garden in Muncie. In 1960 they moved to Indianapolis and the gazebo went with them. After Mrs. Ball died in 1985 it was bequeathed to the Ball Brothers Foundation who had it restored in 1989 and then moved to the Rose Garden. The Rose Garden was dedicated in Spring 1992,



They use herbicides sparingly and very low amounts of insecticides only when necessary. They usually let things run their course depending on the amount of damage. This year they have a lot of spider mites.

As we walked along the streets, we saw borders of native plants. One plant people asked about was Prairie Dropseed. Another was Baptisia which James said they cut down after blooming. He passed around seeds and said to plant ½ inch deep now so that the seeds go through scarification. We also saw globe thistle and catmint.

Next was the Moon Garden which was started by Hamilton County master gardeners with plants having all white and round blooms. Then the prairie took over and they had to remove all that in order to restore it.



We also saw various water features.

In the Orchard Garden fruits and vegetables are grown and are free to the public for picking.

The Herb Garden offers culinary herbs free to pick. One of the plants there was bronze fennel, a host plant for swallowtails.

After the tour some of us went into the Orchard Shop.

Judy Houser, Secretary

Cursed Imports

By: Paul Matzek

We import many beneficial things from Japan, but the Japanese beetle isn't in that category. They are mindless eating machines that can turn a plant's leaves to lace in short order. Organic pesticides are little against adult beetles. Japanese beetle traps can attract and kill them by the thousands, but as Annie warned me, they attract beetles by the ten thousands. As my cherry trees and grape vines grow, so does the attraction for them.

I first hung traps in 2000 and slaughtered them mightily, and in 2021 the infestation wasn't as bad. I again hung traps and slew more. This year, hoping for an even smaller population, I hung a trap in the area between the cherry trees and the grape vines. That killed a lot of beetles but they ate a lot of leaves. I hand pickled beetles trying to keep them in check.

The beetles' don't have much of a defense mechanism. A few that have a grain of intelligence will fly away when they feel vibration in the leaves as you reach for them. More likely, most seem too engorged to take off so they drop toward the ground to gain airspeed to make flight possible. The majority just stupidly drop to the ground, the plan seemingly being to hide in the grass.

A can of soapy water is an effective appliance for hand picking. Simply stick a wide-mouthed container under the beetle. They will often spook from the branch movement and obligingly drop into the suds. A few of the even slower ones will ignore the danger signal and cling to the leaf, but a light tap will usually send them swimming.

Picking beetles four or five times a day helped some, but when one batch is removed, back-up forces shortly move in to continue the destruction. After about a week of this, I got a couple roles of grey fiberglass window screen and sewed pieces together to form a drape to go over my plants. The beetles usually alight on the upper part of a plant, few going to lower branches, so even though a lot of the bottom can be open, most of the beetles are too stupid to fly lower to get to the good stuff.

If only wheel bugs, spiders, and other predators could multiply as fast. Several days after I installed the screen, the crowd of beetles around the trap was so thick they kept hitting me and landing on me as I tried to empty the trap. That was enough to make me move the trap about a hundred feet away to the edge of the woods. Thank goodness they can't sting.



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

Potato Leafhopper

Empoasca fabae

IDENTIFICATION: The adults are lively, green insects that are wedge-shaped and 1/8 to 1/4 inches long and limey green. Despite its name, the potato leafhopper also feeds on numerous crops such as beans, soybeans, legumes like eggplants, and other fruits like raspberries, apples and other fruit trees. It also feeds on common weeds such as smartweed, pigweed, and carpet-weed.



Knowing how leafhoppers look during the different stages of their life cycle and identifying leafhopper damage is crucial to catching leafhoppers early when their numbers are low. This way, you can effectively control this pest before it becomes a heavy infestation. You can identify a leafhopper by the agile way it moves: rapidly, crawling sideways like a crab, jumping both forwards and backwards when disturbed, or hopping to another plant when they feel in danger. The ability to move sideways like crabs and jump sets leafhoppers apart from other similar insects.

Most leafhoppers go through two to three generations each year, peaking between mid-summer and early fall. The earlier you spot leafhoppers, the better you'll be able to control their numbers. Leafhoppers lay their eggs in plants, sometimes on the underside of leaves. In mild climates, leafhopper eggs can also overwinter and hatch when the weather warms up. Newly laid eggs hatch after a couple of weeks.

DAMAGE: Leafhoppers suck sap from leaves, causing them to curl, turn yellow, and then brown. Heavily damaged leaves drop from the plant. Damage may not show up for a few weeks and increases faster in hot, dry weather. Potato leafhoppers attack potato, eggplant, rhubarb, dahlia, and rose. They also damage alfalfa, red maple, and other trees. Both nymphs and adults cause damage.

Leafhoppers are not the only culprits that can damage leaves, so to be sure, also look for tiny dark spots on the underside of leaves, which are leafhopper excrements. Some leafhoppers also secrete honeydew, which then leads to the growth of sooty mold on the leaves.

MANAGEMENT: Plant potatoes early to avoid late-season injury. Insecticides available to homeowners are only marginally effective. Adult leafhoppers move rapidly which makes them difficult to control. Any control measures should aim at getting rid of the eggs or larvae.

Before you take measures to get rid of leafhoppers, determine the level of infestation. Just a few leafhoppers won't cause serious injury to your plants, and natural predators can usually take care of them. But at the same time, you want to make sure that you control their numbers before they become a major infestation.

Biological Control

The first measure of biological control is to encourage beneficial insects such as ladybugs, lacewings, and minute pirate bugs because they are the natural enemies of leafhoppers and keep their population under control. They not only take care of leafhoppers but also feed on other pests, such as aphids, armyworms, and spider mites.

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Chemical Control

Any chemical products should be used on the immature nymphs only. They cannot hop away like the adults, and they are more susceptible to chemicals. Thoroughly spray the leaves with insecticidal soap, especially the underside of leaves where the nymphs like to dwell and feed.

To control a major infestation, you might need to notch it up and apply an insecticide such as a product containing pyrethrins or carbaryl. Keep in mind that any broad-spectrum insecticide will also kill beneficial insects, so apply it in a highly targeted manner only on infested plants. Do not irrigate the plants for 24 hours after application.

Removal of Infested Plants

When plants, especially annuals such as crops, are heavily infested, it is often better to completely remove them than treating it with chemicals. Safely dispose of infested plants in the garbage.

Mechanical Control

Floating row covers can keep leafhoppers away from garden crops. However, they must be removed when flowering begins, even for self-pollinating vegetables because the lack of air circulation and wind can lead to reduced pollination. Floating row covers have the added benefit that they keep other pests such as flea beetles out.

Another way of keeping leafhopper populations at bay is to put up yellow sticky traps near plants that they like to feed on. But just like with insecticides, sticky traps can also harm beneficial insects.

OTHER INFORMATION: Potato leafhoppers migrate from southern U.S. into the Midwest each spring. They are strongly attracted to lights at night and commonly enter homes through window screens.

Sources:

Illinois Natural History Survey; The Bad Guys – Garden Pests

The Spruce - By Nadia Hassani , Published on 01/21/22
<https://www.thespruce.com/getting-rid-of-leafhoppers-5213564>

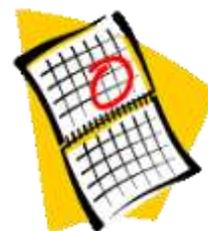
For anyone interested in delving into the history of potato leafhoppers, I found a 1931 paper titled “A Revision of the American Species of Empoasca Known to Occur North of Mexico” at <https://naldc.nal.usda.gov/download/CAT86200225/PDF>



Upcoming Meetings

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

October 15, 2022
January 21, 2023
April 15, 2023
July 22, 2023
October 21, 2023



Ask us...!

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Treasurer's Report 3rd Quarter 2022



Opening Balance July 1, 2022 \$6,061.06

Income

Dues	30.00
Total	\$30.00

Expenses

Newsletter	130.91
WEB plan	100.00
Total	\$238.91

Closing Balance September 30, 2022 \$5,852.15

Respectfully submitted by Larry Bills, Treasurer

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. 15

Sobremesa Farm
47811 N. Mount Gilead Road, Bloomington, IN 47408
812-606-0865 ([Map](#))

11:00—11:45 Pitch-in Lunch
11:45—12:40 Introductions & Gardening Q&A, Business,
1:00 Tour of garden

We will visit Sobremesa Farm, which is part of the farm to table movement, on Saturday, October 15. It's an organic farm near Bloomington. They practice regenerative growing methods using a permaculture approach that results in the finest produce available. Sobremesa Farm was founded in 2013 with the idea of providing organically grown farm fresh fruits and vegetables to the local community.

We will gather at 11AM for our pitch-in luncheon followed by a short meeting. The farm has a covered area with tables and chairs for our meal and meeting. Everyone should bring their own tableware, drink, and a dish to share.

At about 1PM we will be given a tour of the farm by Juan Carlos and/or Robert, who own and manage the farm.

Directions: From south I-465 in Indianapolis, take the Harding St. exit south onto IN-37/I-69 S. Take exit 125 for Sample Road. At the traffic circle take the 3rd exit onto Sample Road. At the traffic circle, take the 1st exit onto Wayport Rd. Turn left onto E. Wylie Rd. Turn right onto N. Old Indiana 37/W. Old State Road 37. Turn left onto E. Robinson Rd. Turn right onto N. Tunnel Rd. Turn left onto IN-45N. Turn right onto N. Mt. Gilead Rd. There may be some construction on IN-37.

Everyone welcome! Questions- call Margaret Smith at 317-698-0526. Iso, please let her know if you plan to attend.

Remember to car pool, if possible.

Join us and bring a friend!



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