

OVER THE GARDEN FENCE

April 2018

EVENTS

- April 11 – MG Training “Wildlife in the Garden” “MG projects”
- April 16 – Garden Design Workshop, Chillicothe
- April 19 – “Edible and Natural Landscapes:” Athens County Soil & Water
- April 23 - Master Gardener monthly meeting “Children’s Garden – Party (clean and prep)”
- May 11 – “Spring Wildflowers and Their Uses” – Vinton Furnace



Dirt = Happiness

Many gardeners will attest to the positive benefits of putting around in the dirt, and there is scientific evidence that those benefits aren’t all in our heads. *Mycobacterium vaccae*, a naturally occurring friendly bacteria found in soil, can be inhaled or can enter our bloodstream through other pathways and has actual antidepressant effects.

Research in the US and UK has found that this bacteria mirrors the effect on neurons that drugs like Prozac provide, stimulating serotonin production, making us feel more relaxed and happier. Studies on animals have found exposure to *M. vaccae* bacteria reduced anxiety-related behaviors and increased cognitive ability. And in human lung cancer patients, injections did not affect overall survival times, but significantly improved patient quality of life with less pain, less nausea and lower stress levels.

This natural antidepressant found in soil has no adverse health effects and the positive effects can last for weeks after exposure. So, get outside and get dirty!

For more information:

<https://qz.com/993258/dirt-has-a-microbiome-and-it-may-double-as-an-antidepressant/>



BUGS AND BLOOMS



Dormant Oil

Dormant oil is sprayed on many trees and shrubs prior to bud break. The light oil suffocates early season scale boring insects and mites. Apply the oil as the temperatures rise above freezing for at least 24 hrs. and before the buds break on the tree. Some local stores and online catalogues offer it for sale.





APRIL GARDEN

Time to get back in the garden

Plant

- Asparagus
- Beets
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Swiss chard
- Collards
- Leeks
- Lettuce
- Mustard
- Onion (sets)
- Peas
- Potato
- Radish
- Spinach
- Turnips

After April 15

- Broccoli
- Brussel Sprouts
- Cauliflower

Plant of the Month



Oleaceae spp.
'Forsythia'

Forsythia, a deciduous shrub belonging to the olive family, is mostly native to eastern Asia. It grows throughout much of the United States and welcomes spring with brilliant yellow blossoms. They prefer full sun, annual pruning after bloom, plenty of water and occasional fertilizer in the spring and summer.

Submit your May Plant of the Month to brown.6000@osu.edu

Plant Sale Volunteer Opportunities

With the arrival of spring, Master Gardener projects are starting in earnest. The Annual Plant Sale will be held on Saturday, May 12, at the Community Center. We are calling all Master Gardeners to volunteer and participate. Start perusing your gardens for plants that need to be divided – perennials, shrubs, trees, etc. Houseplants, succulents, vegetables, herbs are also welcome and needed. Remember the plants have to be potted in clean pots preferably in potting soil. Root development minimally takes two weeks so all plants should be potted no later than April 28. This is time for members to volunteer as diggers or potters if you have the time to help other master gardeners. We will be contacting you!



Digging Deeper

At our March meeting, John Knouse presented a program describing and defining the Athens Conservancy. The Conservancy was started in 2002 as a non-profit land trust. It works for the protection and preservation of public green spaces. John described the activities and successes of the conservancy since its inception. Currently the Conservancy is protecting about 1000 acres which includes Rails to Trails, bridges and tunnels. The land is not necessarily contiguous but does cover many historical transportation routes and landscapes unique to our area.