



# December 2019

## Master Gardener Update

### News and Notes

### Recipe of the Month

*Enjoy on a cold winter's morn with a rich cup of coffee...*

### Baked Oatmeal Muffins

#### Ingredients:

- 2 1/4 cups water
- 2 1/2 cups oats (quick cooking or old fashioned)
- 2 eggs
- 4 Tbs brown sugar, divided
- 2 Tbs oil (vegetable or canola)
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon, divided
- 1/4 cup nonfat milk
- 1 medium apple finely chopped
- 1/4 cup dried fruit (raisins, cranberries, cherries)

SPENDSMART  
EATSMART

Click image for printable  
recipe & nutritional information

#### Instructions:

- Preheat oven to 350°F.
- In a saucepan, bring water to a boil. Add oats and boil for one minute. Remove from heat and let stand five minutes
- In a mixing bowl, beat these together with a fork: eggs, 3 tablespoons brown sugar, oil, baking powder, 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon, and milk.
- Stir in oatmeal, apples, and dried fruit.
- In a small bowl, stir together remaining 1 tablespoon brown sugar and 1 teaspoon cinnamon.
- Lightly coat a muffin tin with cooking spray. Divide oatmeal mixture into 12 muffins. Sprinkle cinnamon sugar mixture on top of the muffins.
- Bake for 30 minutes until the center is set and the top is lightly browned. Let muffins sit for 5 minutes before serving.
- Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator or freezer.

### Season's Greetings



*Thank you so much for all your volunteer time and effort this year!*

*I have really enjoyed this first season working with you and want to thank you for making me feel so welcomed!*

*I wish you joy and peace through the holidays and a fantastic New Year!*

### I spy with my little eye... Holiday Cheer Thanks to Plants




Walking through town or driving through neighborhoods, I see holiday cheer all around. Plants play a big part in decorating for the holidays. From the wonderful scents of Christmas trees and cedar garland to the colorful sights of bright red poinsettias and flowering amaryllis. Pinecones and holly berries adorn wreaths and swags while branches of evergreens, white birch and red twig dogwood fill out planters. What a wonderful scene!

You will also notice another plant commonly found in stores at this time of year—the Norfolk Island Pine. This houseplant offers an answer for people who want a living Christmas tree but not the challenge of having to transplant or tend a container-grown Christmas tree that needs to head out-doors for the winter. The Norfolk Island Pine is not a true pine. It is a tropical plant that hails from a small island near New Zealand. In its natural habitat, it can grow to over 100 feet high but indoors it rarely reaches more than 20 feet (though still pretty tall)! It can grow indoors for many years. My sister's plant, called "Norfie", grew up to the ceiling and was her living Christmas tree for many years. Here's more information on the [Norfolk Island Pine](#). Whatever traditions you have for holiday decorating, I hope it includes lots of wonderful plants!

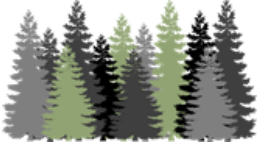


# DECEMBER



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Click <u>underlined</u> links for more information on a topic...	2			5	6	7
8	9	10 While Christmas shopping take advantage of garden supply sales & remember to treat yourself	11	12 <u>Poinsettia Care</u> 	13	14
15	16 Use a mixture of sand and salt to de-ice driveways and sidewalks	17	18 <u>Check stored bulbs or roots of cannas, dahlias, &amp; tuberous begonias, discard any that are discolored or rotting</u>	19	20	21 <i>Winter Solstice</i> 1st Day of Winter 
22 <i>Hanukkah Begins at sundown</i>	23	24 	25 <i>Merry Christmas</i>	26 <i>Kwanza Begins</i>	27	28
29	30 <u>Rotate houseplants regularly to prevent one-sided growth; raise humidity by placing plants on pebble trays</u>	31	1 <i>Happy New Year!</i> 	2	3 	4 Have a cup of cocoa and browse through seed catalogs
5	6 <u>Start herb seeds (such as parsley or basil) for a windowsill garden</u>	7	8	9 <u>Make plans for next year's garden. Be sure to rotate crops to a different location each year</u>	10	11

## Gardening 2020!!



### Earth Day is turning 50!

If you have ideas for celebrating Earth Day's 50th anniversary—let's talk. Maybe we can plan a fun event or two.

### Please share what projects you may need help with in 2020

I can help connect those wanting volunteer time with where it's needed, plus we are planning to have a Level I training starting early March at the Eau Claire County Extension office, so will have new interns to get promptly involved in projects. (I will have details on the training early January)

### Contact me if you are interested in being a mentor to a new volunteer for 2020

We can talk about what this will look like.

### Friendly reminders:

- **Please report donations**

If you volunteer at a garden that donates produce, please report the total number of poundage donated to a national survey provided by the national Extension Master Gardener (EMG) committee. The EMG committee is looking to tally the amount of MGV efforts that go into growing and donating food. You can report at <http://bit.ly/2JtTYVU>.  
Deadline to report is March 15, 2020

- **Level 3 Training: Placemaking Lite**

No need to have taken Level 2 Training to sign up for this training but registration closes end of December. Cost is \$25. For more details and registration information, see the [December Volunteer Vibe](#).

- **Enrollment in the Master Gardener Program**

If you haven't already done so, please enroll in the Master Gardener Program for 2020. Enrollment includes being in the Online Reporting System (ORS), having completed the Criminal Background Check, having completed Mandated Reporter Training, and having agreed to the conditions for volunteer service (volunteer expectations form, assumption of risk form, photo release). In brief, here are the things you need to know:

- \* **WHO:** *ALL volunteers* (current, transfers, new, exempt, etc.) will need to do this. (*Please note* that even if you have taken a temporary exemption & are not currently reporting hours, you still need to enroll)
- \* **WHAT:** The process: Log into the ORS; when prompted, respond to all conditions for volunteer service (this means clicking Yes to things). When you're done, you then enter the ORS like usual to report hours.
- \* **WHEN:** Enrollment is open now. You have until February 1, 2020 to complete it.
- \* **WHERE:** It all takes place in the ORS. (if you cannot access the ORS, please contact me)

If you have already begun submitting hours for this reporting year, that's fine – your hours will count – just complete the enrollment when prompted the next time you log into the ORS.

- The **2020 Native Tree and Plant Sale Program** runs November 1, 2019 through January 31, 2020. The Eau Claire County Land Conservation Division program is open to all so you don't have to be an Eau Claire County Resident to order. For more information, visit their [website](#).
- [Annual Reports](#) are available to view

# Save the Dates

Here are several exciting, gardening events coming up after the holidays.

**January 24-25 Garden Vision Conference**, 1000 W Campus Dr., Wausau, WI  
[View or download brochure](#)

**February 1 Ready, Set, Grow... Winter Garden Seminar**. Chippewa Valley Technical College, 620 W Clairemont Ave., Eau Claire, WI. Hosted by the Eau Claire Area Master Gardener Volunteers Association and Extension-Eau Claire County.  
[View or download brochure](#).

**February 15 Think Spring Garden Seminar** Avalon Hotel & Conference Center, 1009 W Park Ave, Chippewa Falls, WI. Sponsored by Chippewa Valley Master Gardener Association and Extension-Chippewa County. [View or download brochure](#).

**March 7 Spring Begins! 10th Annual Garden Seminar**. Dunn County Community Services Building, 3001 US Hwy 12 E, Menomonie, WI. Hosted by Dunn County Master Gardener Association and Extension-Dunn County. [Brochure available in January](#).

If you have a gardening event, activity or class that you want to share, email me the details

Happy Holidays!

## Winter Tips for Birders



### Provide different types of feeders

To attract the greatest variety of species, provide table-like feeders for ground feeding birds, hopper or tube feeders for shrub and treetop feeders, and suet feeders for woodpeckers, nuthatches and chickadees.

### Provide suet during cool weather only

Suet (beef fat) attracts insect-eating birds such as woodpeckers, chickadees and nuthatches. Place the suet in a suet feeder—they come in many styles—and hang it at least five feet from the ground to keep it out of the reach of dogs. Do not put out suet during hot weather as it can turn rancid.

### Offer a water source

Water is a critical ingredient of a winter feeding program. Provide a birdbath with a heating element (one would make a good holiday present for the bird enthusiast in the family). Don't worry about birds freezing if they bathe on a cold winter day since the water is primarily for drinking.



## Quick Links

[WI Master Gardener](#)

[MG Online Hours Login](#)

[The Learning Store](#)

[Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic](#)

[UW Insect Diagnostic Lab](#)

[UW Soil Lab—Lawn & Garden](#)

[WIMGA](#)

[Questions or Comments](#)

## For questions, comments or to contribute an article or photo

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