



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Hardin County Extension News Release

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Hardin Co. Master Gardeners Win State Awards

Hardin County – The Hardin County OSU Extension Master Gardener Volunteers (MGV) brought back two state awards from the Ohio MGV Conference held September 29-30 at The Ohio State University in Columbus. ‘Invasive Species Media Series’ was recognized as state winner for the Invasive Species Outstanding MGV Project award category for medium sized groups at this annual conference. Also, the Hardin County group was recognized as a platinum ‘Standards of Excellence’ award winner.

Seeing a local need to educate the public about the spread of invasive species, Master Gardener Volunteer Barb Snyder prepared and published a series of newspaper articles on 15 of the most common Ohio Invasive Species. Along with introducing the concept of invasive species, the articles gave the history of the introduction of each, identification and life cycle including photos, as well as removal and control. The goal was to help the general public to identify and control invasive species. In addition, since Hardin County is the home to Lawrence Woods State Nature Preserve, it is important that residents identify and reduce invasive species in the county.

The county is also an agricultural county, where many of these species have become established and can create displacement of native species. Local wood lots are invaded by Honeysuckle, wetlands are invaded by Reed Canary Grass, Common Reed Grass and Purple Loosestrife. Hardin County is the headwaters of three important river systems in Ohio, the Scioto, the Blanchard, and the Little Miami. These waterways generally have natural edge waters that make places where invasive species can grow and multiple, as well as highways for spread.

The 15 weekly articles presented plant descriptions, growing habits, and control management schemes of the most common and successful invasive plants. The articles included photos of the plants. Species presented in the articles included Garlic Mustard, Honeysuckle, Multiflora Rose, Autumn Olive, Field Bindweed, Reed Canary Grass, Purple Loosestrife, Asian Bittersweet, Canada Thistle, Tree of Heaven,

Buckthorn, Teasel, Johnsongrass, Japanese Knotweed, and Common Reed Grass. The articles appeared in consecutive weekly articles beginning mid-March of 2016 and continuing until the end of June.

In addition to winning this state award, the Hardin County Master Gardener Volunteers were recognized with the platinum 'Standards for Excellence' distinction. This is the highest degree of accomplishment for a county Master Gardener Volunteer program, based on guidelines set up by the Ohio State University Extension. Local nominations for Outstanding Master Gardener Volunteer and Friend of MGV were also submitted for statewide recognition.

Master Gardener Judy Dorsey was nominated by the local group as Hardin County's Outstanding Master Gardener Volunteer for 2017. Education has always been an important part of her volunteer work within the MGV program as she is a retired educator from the public school system. Dorsey has taken on the role as chair for the Children's Day at the Friendship Gardens, one of the annual outreach projects to the children of Hardin County. She has been a driving force to provide hands-on opportunities to learn at this state award winning project.

Dorsey has organized topics and gathered the required resources to allow other volunteers to be successful at leading the educational day with the youth. She was one of the volunteers that worked with a new vertical garden project in 2016 that taught preschoolers to plant in an unused space within the garden. She has also taken on leadership roles within the MGV program at the county level, continuing to serve as the vice president of the organization. Dorsey is also member of the Keep Hardin County Beautiful board and shows leadership within that group.

Hardin County's nomination for this year's Friend of MGV award was the Millstream Rose Society. The Millstream Rose Society, a local affiliate of the American Rose Society, has been involved with the Hardin County MGV program for the past 7 years. This organization has been a strong supporter of the Hardin County MGV Project, The Friendship Gardens of Hardin County. The group has provided technical and monetary support in planning and planting the award winning Rose Garden. In addition, it has partnered with other projects to develop the overall garden plan.

Attached photo caption – Hardin County OSU Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Coordinator Dave McPheron accepts the state award for the Outstanding MGV Invasive Species Project-medium division at the State Master Gardener Volunteer Conference.