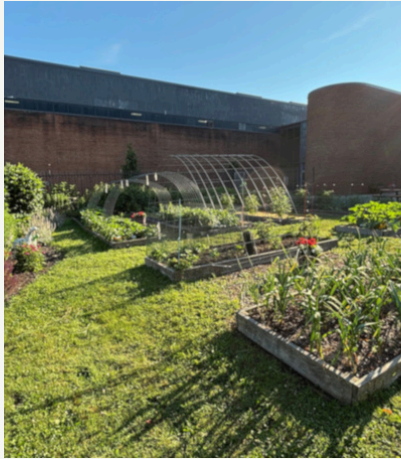




SOW & SO

WFB COMMUNITY GARDEN NEWSLETTER



Updates & Announcements

Typical of Wisconsin, we have had chilly gardening days, and now unbearable heat! Thank you to all the volunteers who continue to show up for the garden.

Please know that whenever I am at the garden throughout the day, I have many community members comment on how great the garden looks and how appreciative they are of the volunteers that maintain it!!

We currently have the following crops growing ...

Cucumbers, Lettuce, Pole Beans, Bush Beans, Swiss Chard, Spinach, Kale, Patty pan squash, Zucchini, Radishes, Beets, Carrots, Eggplant, Kohlrabi, Cantaloupe, White Onions, Red Onions, Garlic, Raspberries, Blackberries, and a wide variety of Tomatoes! We utilize every inch of our garden space!

We love our butterflies! Several Lydell Preschool families have adopted baby caterpillars and eggs to raise Monarchs from our garden. We also have dill and parsley for our Swallowtail friends. Our garden is full of life!

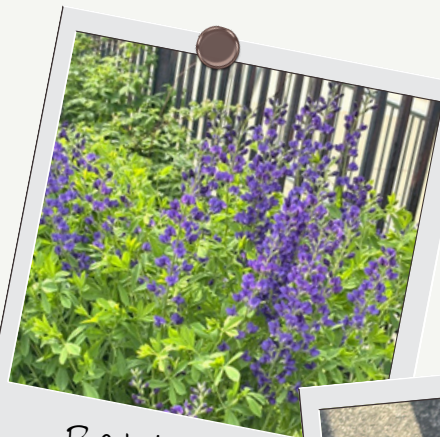
Looking forward to many more days of gardening!

Miriam Gerriets

Miriam Gerriets
Community Garden Coordinator



Tomatoes



Baptisia



Wisteria



Beets



What is Milkweed Yellows Phytoplasma?

BY HABITAT NEWS, THE MONACH JOINT VENTURE

Those who support monarchs and pollinators by fostering monarch habitat know it is sometimes challenging. Several diseases and pests can affect milkweed, leaving habitat managers wondering what to do. Some symptoms of diseased or unhealthy milkweed plants include unusual spots on the leaves, misshapen or asymmetrical leaves or pods, or plants that appear wilted or weakened. Recent inquiries about yellowing or odd-looking milkweeds inspired us to dig into plant diseases, specifically milkweed yellows phytoplasma.

Phytoplasmas are bacteria; they do not have a cell wall and are enclosed by a single membrane. They cause diseases in plants and are spread by insect vectors, primarily leafhoppers. Leafhoppers aren't the only insect that can spread phytoplasma, but most known vectors are in the insect order Hemiptera. Their piercing/sucking mouthparts allow them to feed on the phloem of plants, where phytoplasmas live. These phloem-feeding insect vectors can transfer diseases, such as milkweed yellows phytoplasma, by feeding on an infected plant and spreading it to healthy plants. After feeding on a diseased plant, the phytoplasma cells replicate in the insect and are injected into a healthy plant's phytoplasma cells via the insect's saliva during feeding.

How do you know if your milkweed has a phytoplasma disease? There are a few symptoms to look for, according to the [**Phytoplasma Resource Center**](#) found on the [**USDA Agricultural Research Service website**](#):

- *Phyllody*—development of leaf-like growths in place of normal flower parts
- *Virescence*—development of green color in place of normal flower color
- *Witches Broom*—abnormal, excessive proliferation of axillary shoots resulting in a broom-like growth
- *Yellowing*—leaves lose their normal green color, becoming yellow
- *Little leaf*—development of abnormally small leaves
- *Proliferation*—abnormal growth of numerous stems



- Necrosis—death of cells and/or tissues
- Dieback—the death of branches
- Stunting—overall reduction of plant height
- Bunch top—shortening of internodes at and near the tip of a branch, resulting in bunched growth at the end of the branch

What should you do if you suspect phytoplasma in your milkweed patch? Since insect vectors spread the disease, one way to get phytoplasma under control is to quickly and effectively eliminate any milkweeds suspected of phytoplasma at the first sign of the disease. By digging out an infected plant, you reduce the chances of other insects feeding on that plant and becoming vectors of the disease.

For more information on phytoplasma, visit the Phytoplasma Resource Center:

<https://plantpathology.ba.ars.usda.gov/phytoplasma.html>

For more information on milkweed diseases and control, look to the Xerces Society's handbook (Milkweed: A conservation practitioner's Guide):

<https://www.xerces.org/publications/guidelines/milkweeds-conservation-practitioners-guide>



1.) Yellowing



2.) Witches Broom & Yellowing



3.) Virescence

ABOUT US

The Monarch Joint Venture (MJV) is a national conservation nonprofit that implements science-based conservation actions for monarch butterflies and other pollinators through four main pillars: habitat, science, education, and partnership.



Flower of the Month:

MALTESE-CROSS

Silene chalcedonica, the Maltese-cross or scarlet lychnis, is a species of flowering plant in the family Caryophyllaceae, native to Eurasia. Beloved by pollinators, this plant is a staple for attracting hummingbirds and butterflies while naturally deterring deer and rabbits.

Characteristics

- **Appearance:** Each flower consists of 5 bright, scarlet-red petals. The tip of each petal is deeply cleft into two ragged lobes.
- **Foliage:** Growing 2 to 3 feet tall, the plant features lush, lanceolate green leaves grown in opposite pairs along hairy, unbranched upright stalks.
- **Light & Soil:** Maltese Cross grows best in full sun (though it tolerates partial afternoon shade) in average, well-drained, consistently moist soil.
- **Maintenance:** It boasts a high rating for durability, holding the prestigious Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Garden Merit. To maximize its blooming season, remove the old flowers (deadhead) at their base, which encourages fresh blooms throughout the summer.

Did you know? The plant gets its name from the shape of its flowers, which resemble the emblematic cross of the Knights of Malta. Other common religious and historical names include the Cross of Jerusalem, Flower of Bristol, and the Tears of Christ.

Gardening *Fun Fact*

Some flowers smell remarkably delicious—the Chocolate Cosmos carries a deep, rich scent identical to actual chocolate. On the extreme opposite end, the Titan Arum (Corpse Flower) smells exactly like rotting flesh to attract pollinating carrion beetles. Gross!



Garden to Table

Recipe inspiration from what we grow in our garden!

BEET SALAD

with goat cheese & balsamic

Ingredients:

- 4 to 5 medium beets
- Extra-virgin olive oil, for drizzling
- 2 cups salad greens, arugula or spring mix
- ½ shallot, thinly sliced
- ½ green apple, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup toasted walnuts
- 2 ounces goat cheese, torn
- Microgreens, optional
- Balsamic Vinaigrette
- Flaky sea salt
- Freshly ground black pepper



Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. Place each beet on a piece of foil. Drizzle generously with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Wrap the beets in the foil, place on a baking sheet, and roast for 35 to 60 minutes, or until fork-tender. The timing will depend on the size and freshness of the beets.
3. Let the beets cool and chill them in the fridge until ready to use.
4. Slice the beets into ¼-inch-thick rounds. Assemble the salad with the greens, shallots, apples, beets, walnuts, cheese, and microgreens, if using. Drizzle with balsamic vinaigrette. Season with flaky sea salt and pepper and serve.

RECIPE NOTES

This recipe works with beets of any color. Pictured are red and golden beets.

Bon Appetite!



We Need You

The garden is completely supported by community member donations. Donations will go towards plants, tools, maintenance, and coordination of the garden.

Donor Levels

Perennial \$35-\$99
Cultivating \$100-\$499
Heirloom \$500+



If you are interested in making a donation, please contact the WFB Recreation Department

2026 Donors

Janet Schirtzinger

Perennial Donation

Kenwood Demaris

Cultivating Donation

Mary Mueller

Cultivating Donation

Karlene Fox

Heirloom Donation

Kim & Ethan Wong

Heirloom Donation

WFB Garden Club

Cultivating Donation

Ted Fleagle

Trellis Donation

Thank you!!!

Becoming a Sponsor

By becoming a business sponsor, your company will help the Community Garden by securing water, equipment, staff support and general garden expenses while your business grows through the publicity we can provide!

ANNUAL BUSINESS SPONSORSHIP PACKAGES

Harvest Level \$1000

Cornucopia Level \$2500

In-Kind Donations In the amount of your choosing

Donations made this way will earn sponsors a one-time public thank you for their donation.



2026 Business Sponsors

Growing Community one Seed at a Time

SARAH & CO.

Cornucopia Sponsor

Sarah & Co. have partnered with the Whitefish Bay Community Garden for six years now!

As Realtors, Sarah & Co. began with the desire to take a client-driven, collaborative approach to real estate. "Our client-first strategy allows us to draw on our years of market experience, tenacious negotiation skills and strong eye for staging in an atmosphere that is comfortable and confident. We rely on our track record of strong client-relationships and recognition for our hard work, including membership in Shorewest Realtors' Executive Club, to lead our path going forward."

With this approach, along with almost 20 years of combined experience and over \$65 million in sales and the support from Shorewest Realtors' award-winning team, Sarah & Co. is ready to welcome you home!



[CLICK FOR WEBSITE](#)

EASTCASTLE PLACE

Harvest Sponsor

We are thrilled to welcome back Eastcastle Place as a business sponsor for a second year!

For over 140 years, Eastcastle Place's mission as a non-profit senior living community is to serve residents and their families by offering a full continuum of care and fostering active and fulfilling lifestyles of our residents. We offer senior living that includes independent living, assisted living, memory care, skilled nursing and rehabilitation all under one roof and right in the heart of Milwaukee's East Side. Eastcastle Place provides residents with maintenance-free living, an array of amenities and services to allow more time to pursue passions and interests, and a family-like atmosphere. We are always embracing new ideas that help residents keep exploring, learning and thriving every day. Visit us to learn more and experience Eastcastle Place for yourself!



[CLICK FOR WEBSITE](#)



Volunteers Welcome!

**If you know a friend or family member who would be interested in volunteering,
let them know it's never too late to join us!**

Here's what to expect as a garden volunteer:

- Miriam, the Garden Coordinator, will schedule a work time once or twice per week during the growing season, depending on the weather and what work needs to be done. Usually, the work sessions are one to two hours long.
- You will receive an email with the volunteer opportunities. The email will include a link to the SignUpGenius garden page.
- From there, you can choose which sessions you'll be able to volunteer for. If a session is cancelled due to weather, Miriam will notify you via SignUpGenius.
- Show up at the WFB Community Garden and meet Miriam and the other volunteers at your scheduled work time. The garden is located on the WFB High School lot off of Marlborough, between the Field House and Memorial Gym.
- Once you arrive, Miriam will let you know what work needs to be done.
- Please bring garden gloves and hand tools. A bottle of water is a great idea too.

**If you are a volunteer, be sure to check your email regularly for work dates & times,
events, Sow & So's, and more!**



*The garden is flourishing
thanks to our volunteers!*



*Mr. Bunny wanted to
lend a hand!*

