



# Gardenfest

ready, set, grow

**Saturday, April 9, 2022 | 7:30 a.m.–4 p.m.**  
**Luecht Auditorium at MCC**  
**Building B, 8900 U.S. Highway 14, Crystal Lake**  
[www.mchenry.edu/gardenfest](http://www.mchenry.edu/gardenfest)

### **The Gardener as Artist**

Thinking outside the Phlox; coloring outside the lines. Yes, you ARE an artist in your garden. This program looks at public and private gardens—from the quirky and magical to the elegant and innovative—and the plants and garden art within them. If you need inspiration, this is for you.

### **Botanical Humor: You Never Knew Plants Were So Funny**

Chris Benda offers a delightful presentation about plants. Chris has been teaching about plants for over 10 years, and during that time has developed a unique teaching style that includes lots of puns, jokes, and whimsical pop culture references. This presentation will be sure to keep you entertained and leave you with fun ways to think about plants.

### **Improving Your Garden Soil**

Whether you've purchased an existing property or built a new home, your soil might not be the best for growing gardens. Even your existing soil might need some improvement! Join Rich as he explores ways to improve the soil beneath your feet—whether urban, suburban, or small agricultural land.

### **Pests and Disease in the Garden**

Has your garden been attacked by an insect pest? Has a disease ravaged your plants? This class will introduce you to the most common insects and diseases found in McHenry County gardens and discuss both organic and conventional ways to control these pests.

### **MCC Greenhouse Tour**

The MCC Greenhouse includes three bays of plants and plenty of learning. Join Rich as he leads a tour of the MCC Greenhouse and discusses the construction, facilities, and plants grown there. Plan to spend a few extra minutes in Bay #3, which houses the hydroponic and aquaponic gardens. *Class limited to 25 students.*

### **All About Tea Gardens**

What is a tea garden and where can you find them? Can you plant your own? Learn all about tea gardens as we touch on the history of real tea, how it is grown, and how it is different from herbal teas. We'll also have some samples of herbal tea blends to share with you!



### **All About Dahlias**

Learn all about the flower everyone loves! Discover why they come in so many colors and shapes; where they came from and how they got to the U.S.; and how to grow them, propagate them, and store them over the winter. This is a fun, fast-moving presentation that covers a lot of ground while still leaving time for Q&A—so bring your dahlia-growing questions!

### **Weed Management in Vegetable Gardens**

Weeds present a number of challenges for new and experienced vegetable gardeners alike. They compete for resources—such as water, nutrients, and sunlight—and can also harbor insect pests, serve as a host for viruses, and be hazardous to gardeners. This session will include characteristics and approaches to weed management, identification of common weeds in northern Illinois, and strategies for control.

### **Growing Mushrooms in Your Backyard**

While the shady part of your yard can be challenging for gardening, it's the perfect place for growing specialty mushrooms. Gain an understanding of what fungi are and why they produce mushrooms. We'll cover all the steps involved in backyard mushroom production!

### **Covering Ground: Preventing Weeds with Living Mulch**

Good native compositions need to be both legible and easy to maintain. Too many native plantings look messy, and even the homeowner can't tell the plants from the weeds. Discover how native cool season ground covers can be a useful tool to fill in between other plants. We'll discuss what plants serve this function here in northern Illinois, and how to integrate them into your native compositions.

### **You Can Grow It From Seed!**

This session will present practical methods for saving seeds and using them to grow just about anything you want. Growing plants from seed can be easy. Learn how to create the right conditions for your seedlings, the different types of seed available, and how (and why!) to save your own seed.

### **Unexpected Edibles**

Add color and flavor to salads, cakes, and cocktails with flowers and other unexpected edibles. We'll discuss specific varieties you can grow at home—and some you may already have! You'll learn the best methods for harvesting and storing these edible plants, as well as dozens of uses for them.

### **Container Gardens**

Spark your creativity with container gardening! Michael's use of texture, color, and bloom time is renowned in the container gardens sold by Countryside Flower Shop, Nursery, and Garden Center. Michael is not shy when it comes to mixing it up. Annuals, perennials, groundcovers, and tropical plants make stunning container gardens—some for sun, others for shade. Michael is known as the person to see at Countryside for containers that are the envy of the neighborhood!

### **Vegetable Gardening in Small Spaces**

Not everyone has the land for a large garden—but you don't need acreage to grow fruits and vegetables! All you need is 6–8 hours of sun and good soil. Learn how to incorporate vegetables into your existing sunny flower beds, add herbs in the nooks and crannies around the patio, and grow vegetables in containers. See what combinations work well together to harvest the most from your small space.

### **Native Landscaping for Winter Beauty (Webinar)**

Join Sarah Michehl from The Land Conservancy of McHenry County for some winter landscaping tips that show off the beauty of our native grasses, wildflowers, and shrubs. We'll also discuss the connection between these plants and local wildlife.

### **Dragons and Damsels: The Amazing World of Odonata**

No other animal on earth comes close to achieving the dazzling aeronautics, visual acuity, or bizarre life history of dragonflies and damselflies. Come experience an image-intensive, up close, and personal presentation of the insect order Odonata, a captivating group of insects with ancestors dating back over 300 million years. Insect populations have been declining over the past few decades, in some cases at truly alarming rates. Odonates have survived major extinction events before—but will they make it through this one? And why should we care? Conservation of a group of organisms must always first begin with human appreciation.