



2019 Grand Rapids Smart Gardening Conference

Saturday March 2, 2019

DeVos Place

303 Monroe Ave. NW

Grand Rapids, MI 49503

8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.



8:50 Welcome! – Diane Brady, Conference Coordinator, MSU Extension

“Sugar, Sex and Poison: Shocking Plant Secrets Caught on Camera”

William (Bill) Cullina, Executive Director, Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens

Plants are at the base of both the human and non-human food chain. Everything eats them directly or indirectly, which may or may not be a good thing as far as plants are concerned. Since they do not move around, it is easy to forget that plants are not helpless. They have evolved an incredible arsenal of chemicals, camouflage, spines, hairs, and waxes to discourage herbivores. On the other hand, they spend a huge amount of their energy on pollen, nectar, edible fruits, and sugary root exudates designed to attract and nourish animals, insects, fungi and bacteria so they can perform services such as pollination, seed dispersal, defense, and nutrient acquisition. It is a carefully balanced natural economy and community based on the products of photosynthesis that is amazing in its complexity and efficiency. Strengthening this natural economy through sound horticultural and agricultural practices is in essence what the organic movement is all about. In this talk, Cullina will show how this world of pollen, poisons, pigments, pheromones, sugars and sex translates to sound gardening practices from which we can all benefit!



“Smart New Shrubs-Advancements in Woody Plant Genetics”

Tim Wood, Spring Meadow Nursery Horticulturist, a.k.a. “The Plant Hunter”

Never in the history of horticulture has so much plant breeding been devoted to improving flowering shrubs. The changes and improvements are nothing short of remarkable, as breeders have made shrubs easier to grow, easier to care for, more colorful and easier to use. No one knows this better than nationally noted, horticulturist and author Tim Wood. Better known as the “Plant Hunter” for Proven Winners, Wood travels the entire world looking for plants, working with plant breeders and breeding plants himself. Come and see the latest and greatest plants that will make your garden and landscapes more colorful and sustainable. Wood will have his latest book, available for sale and signing following the presentation.



“Smart Perennials for Midwestern Gardens from A-Z!”

Richard Hawke- Chicago Botanic Garden, Plant Evaluation Manager, Associate Scientist

It's new...but is it tried and true? Richard will share information on the plants that have proven both beautiful and hardy in Chicago Botanic Garden's plant evaluation programs. The goal of the trial program is to determine, through scientific evaluation, which plants are superior for gardens in the Upper Midwest. Plants are rated on ornamental qualities, cultural adaptability, winter hardiness, and disease and pest resistance. Find out which plants passed with flying colors and provide support for pollinators from an evaluation program that has been recommending the best garden perennials for 30 years!



12:30 - 1:45 p.m. – Lunch: Visit the West Michigan Home and Garden Show!

“Demystifying GMOs for Gardeners”

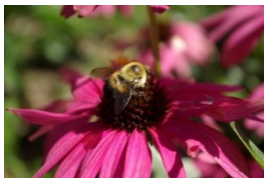
Dr. Ron Goldy, Michigan State University Extension, Senior Educator



GMO's are possibly one of the most misunderstood organisms on the face of our planet. “GMO” stands for genetically modified organisms, something man has been doing for thousands of years. How does a gardener make informed choices, not only about food items but also later on, with seeds and plants? Join Senior Extension professional Dr. Ron Goldy for a look at what GMOs really are, how they are created and how they impact our world.

“Great to Support Pollinators-Gardeners make the Difference!”

Richard Hawke- Chicago Botanic Garden, Plant Evaluation Manager and Associate Scientist



Native pollinators are declining at an alarming rate—especially bumblebees. What are the best perennial plants to attract and support pollinators? Hawke will present a variety of native plants, “nativars” (cultivars of a native species), and a few exotics that have been top-performers in the Chicago Botanic Garden's trials.

3:50 – 4:15 p.m. –Silent Auction/Door Prizes and Wrap Up

Don't miss door prizes, gift bags, free plant, great vendor items and a weekend pass to the West Michigan Home and Garden Show too!

Also bid on items at the silent auction with proceeds to be used for future conference registrant scholarships. (Cash and check payments only.)

To reserve a seat, register at:

<https://events.anr.msu.edu/2019GRSmartGardeningConference/>

Please indicate in the registration if you would like to be considered for a partial scholarship.

The conference qualifies for 6 MSU Extension Master Gardener Education Credits to be reported by selecting the project “2019 Smart Gardening Conference – Grand Rapids”

Cost: \$59.00

Registration deadline is Friday, Feb. 23, 2019 or until full

Registration at the door is not available.



Payment by Credit Card: Recommended at this secure MSU payment site to expedite your seat reservation.

Payment by check: Please allow 10 business days for check processing.

- **Your seat is *not* reserved until your balance is paid in full.**
- You will receive a confirmation email once you have registered and your balance is paid in full.
- Your registration name badge, which will provide you admittance to the 2019 West Michigan Home and Garden Show, will be mailed to you prior to the conference.

Cancellation Policy: Sorry, no refunds, but attendance substitutions are acceptable.

This event will not be cancelled unless the facility closes.

Accommodations

Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Accommodations for persons with disabilities may be requested by contacting the event contact two weeks prior to the start of the event. Requests received after this date will be honored whenever possible.

Contact Information

Questions about the Grand Rapids Smart Gardening Conference? Contact Diane Brady at bradydi1@msu.edu 616-632-7865.