Watermelon Radish is Chinese Heirloom
By: Sharon Sweeny

Watermelon radishes are one of those odd-colored vegetables you buy so it looks good on your table. After you taste it you buy it because it tastes good.

I admit I bought seeds last spring because I liked the way they look—creamy white skins with green underneath and the interior a delicious looking pink, just like a watermelon.

According to the seed package they take 65 days to mature, twice as long as regular garden radishes. I eagerly planted them, looking forward to pink fleshed radishes ready to eat just when the regular garden variety radishes were all picked and eaten.

Locally, our spring weather was cold, wet and dreary long past the usual time, then the weather turned hot and dry to the point of a drought. Most of the radishes bolted before they could fully mature. I was able to find a couple of a size large enough to eat. They were very tasty.

Because it was the first time I had ever grown them, I left the watermelon radishes growing to observe their growth and give them a chance to set seed. The seeds were fully mature in about 45 days after the flower stalks shot up.

Watermelon radishes are an heirloom variety of Daikon radishes. In Chinese they are called Shin-Ri-Mei, which means “Beauty in the Heart.” Its Latin name is Raphanus sativus acanthiformis.

Watermelon radishes taste milder than most radishes and their taste mellows as they mature, in contrast to other radish varieties.

Plant watermelon radishes from early to late spring, planting every two weeks for a continuous harvest. They like a fairly rich soil and plenty of water at all stages of their growth. Plant seeds evenly about 1/2 inch deep in rows 6 inches apart. Firm soil. When seedlings are an inch high, thin to stand about 2 inches apart.

Continued on page 3
Wine And Moonlight In The Gardens
by Stefan Fediuk, Chief Editorial Director

Have you ever come home from a long day at work, headed into your garden for some "you" time, and wondered if there were other ways to enjoy your garden that you might be missing? I used to do this, until I realized that there really was an alternative.

It actually came to me while sitting in my garden one summers eve on a tête-à-tête bench, sipping a nice glass of Malbec. The evening was one of those comfortable nights we sometimes get here in the dynamic and wonderful North; you know, the ones where the temperature isn't very cool and yet isn't exactly sweltering. There was a slight breeze blowing and thus no infernal mosquitoes to make me want to run back inside.

This was also a night when the moon hung in the night sky full and bright. I really didn't appreciate it at first, but as the wine set in and I began to relax, I found myself becoming aware of different things that I hadn't really noticed in the daylight.

The first thing to grab my attention was the fact that I could hear the smallest of creatures more clearly. The crickets' chirping was louder, and yet more melodic. The breeze, which blew sporadically through the yard, rustled the leaves and an unfamiliar yet pleasing scent from the flowers in the garden became more pronounced. The same passing gust of wind would also cause some of the plants to sway. I particularly noticed the Gooseneck Loosestrife (Lysimachia clethroides). As the wind blew, their 'S'-shaped spikes bobbed back and forth, resembling a gaggle of geese strutting their stuff through my yard.

At this point, I'm not sure whether I had an epiphany or if it was just the wine, but this was something that I would never have experienced or appreciated in the light of day. It suddenly became apparent to me that the intense flowers of the brightly colored petunias and marigolds were no longer evident. The darker flowers were all but a memory at night. Instead, those filler plants of white had now taken center stage and were reflecting the moonlight back at me. In the full light of day, these would have been lost in the noise and color of the garden and I'd have just passed them by, but now at night, shimmering under the moonlight, they demanded my attention.

I sat there for what seemed like hours, taking note of the various plants which had seized control of my night vision. Among the most commanding of these were the Helen Campbell Spider Flower (Cleome spinosa "Helen Campbell"), Casablanca Lily (Lilium hybridum 'Casablanca'), and the towering clustered bells of Sweet-scented Tobacco (Nicotiana sylvestris). Besides its radiance under the moonlight, this plant also imparted a scent of fine jasmine to me.

And yet, the scent of another plant filled the air. It seemed to me that it had a sweet scent, quite like that of honey. It was then I realized that what I was smelling were the abundant blooms of the Basswood tree (Tilia americana) that I had been sitting under. Still another scent which I hadn't noticed in the daytime was wafting through the air. It was strongly talc, if you can understand my meaning. And when it finally came to me what I was smelling, I then understood that there was a good reason why people rave about Honeybells Plantain Lily (Hosta plantaginea 'Honeybells').

There was also a glimmer of dusty blue throughout the garden, as the moonbeams reflected off the silver-leaf plants, and especially the herbs in my vegetable garden. The two most apparent were the Wooly Lamb's Ears (Stachys byzantina) and the ornamental Wormwood (Artemisia spp.), also known as Dusty Miller. And I paused and thought to myself, I had always looked at how my garden appeared in the daylight, when in reality, the best viewing was at night!

The moon has since captured my interest many times now, when I stroll through gardens in the late evenings in the summer. And since this initial and most intoxicating experience of “wine and moonlight” in my garden that summer evening some 12 years ago, I have become an advocate for gardeners to take advantage of the moonlight. Any gardener who doesn’t make the occasional opportunity to savor their garden on a moonlit night doesn’t really know what he or she is missing!

Now when I amble through my garden on a moonlit night, I get the sense that I am walking with the fairy folk and the gods. Of course, with a glass of Malbec or Merlot in hand, that god could only be Bacchus or Dionysus. But then I remember that the plant I love the most in the moonlight is named after the Greek Goddess of the Moon, Artemis. Is that more than a coincidence? That’s when I know I have created my sacred space in the moonlight.

If you love radishes, grow watermelon radishes for a month or more worth of radishes after the regular garden variety of radishes have finished. Watermelon radishes can be eaten raw or cooked. They can be roasted, stir-fried, or added to soups and stews. Their unusual color is a welcome addition to the relish tray.

From now on, just like regular garden variety radishes, watermelon radishes will always have a place in my vegetable garden.

http://moxiegardener.com/tag/watermelon-radish/

---

**News From Winnebago County MGV**

The second annual Winter Escape~Summer Dreams seminar, sponsored by the Winnebago County Master Gardener Volunteer Association (WCMGA), is set for Saturday, February 26, 2011 at Bridgewood Resort Hotel, Neenah. Jeff Epping and Michael and Kathi Rock will be the featured speakers at this day-long event which is open to the public.

Epping is the director of horticulture at Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison. He will lead participants on a virtual tour of some of the finest public gardens in the United States including the New York Botanical Garden and the Lurie Garden in Chicago as well as French and English Gardens. His second presentation will be on small trees with big impact for Midwestern gardens.

The Rocks have been studying hummingbirds for over 10 years, maintain over 20 feeders and have tailored their Madison garden to the needs of hummingbirds. They will discuss the habits of hummingbirds and what it takes to attract them to your garden.

Winter Escape~Summer Dreams begins at 7:30 a.m. with a continental breakfast, includes lunch, and ends promptly at 3 p.m. An expanded vendor area has been added this year. The cost is $35 through January 31, 2011 or $40 after that date. For a registration brochure, go to www.winnebagomastergardeners.org or contact Audrey Ruedinger at 231-5745 or aruedinger2@new.rr.com.

---

Continued From Page 1

If you love radishes, grow watermelon radishes for a month or more worth of radishes after the regular garden variety of radishes have finished. Watermelon radishes can be eaten raw or cooked. They can be roasted, stir-fried, or added to soups and stews. Their unusual color is a welcome addition to the relish tray.

From now on, just like regular garden variety radishes, watermelon radishes will always have a place in my vegetable garden.

http://moxiegardener.com/tag/watermelon-radish/

---
** News from the Annual Report for 2010 **

** Two new groups joined Master Gardener Volunteers, Vilas Co. in March and Dunn Co. in October, making a total of 53 counties participating in the MG program. **

** There are over 2942 trained MGV's who have certified or recertified in 2010. Approximately 883 MGV's were trained in 2010 through the MG Program Office and are now working to complete their initial volunteer and certification requirements. **

** Master Gardener Volunteers in Wisconsin contributed 209,509 hours to UW-Extension and their communities in 2010. The value of their volunteer service is worth more than $54.37 million* throughout the state. *{ using an estimated dollar value of volunteer time of $20. 85 per hour as calculated by independent sector}. **

** MG's also participated in over 74,872 hours of continuing education hours to keep them actively learning and updated

---

### Volunteer Service Awards

150 Hours: Ann Arbuckle  
Phyllis Schippers  
Sandra Stock

250 Hours: Karen Seipel  
Doreen Strouf

500 Hours: Helen Massey

750 Hours: Kari Alice Lynn  
Judy Vogel

1000 Hours: Ann Unertl

---

### A Message From Shelley Ryan......

I would like to take this time of the year to thank all Wisconsin Master Gardener Volunteers, not only for your financial support of The Wisconsin Gardener television show, but also for your great ideas, and talent on the show. Without your support there truly would be no Wisconsin Gardener program. Without your ideas, suggestions and gardens to visit the show simply would not be as informative and beautiful as it is.

Thank you, all of you, and Happy Holidays.

Sincerely,

Shelley Ryan

---

### Volunteer Opportunity, Community Education

An opportunity for one or two people to answer the public's questions on horticulture problems in the Plant Clinic. It would be in several mornings at the Extension office. Either alone or together {if so we would need more than two volunteers} If interested, please contact Dorothy by phone or E-mail. She will be happy to answer your questions about the Clinic.
Page reserved for page from Annual Report for Manitowoc County
Forcing Branches Bring Spring Indoors Early For Winter Color And Fragrance
by Nancy Gingrich Shenk

A simple bouquet of forsythia hints at the spring ahead as it glows in the low January sun. After all the Christmas decorations are packed away the house looks drab. So instead of letting the winter blues kick in, we make our rooms warm and inviting with flowers. We force the usual amaryllis, paperwhites, and tulip bulbs, but we also force branches into bloom to add even more color and fragrance to our suddenly quiet home. It is very satisfying to sit in our breakfast room early in the morning and observe the daily progress of forsythia buds as they swell and burst open. We cannot think of a more economical way to raise our spirits.

Collect branches in January and February
Many ornamental trees and shrubs set their flower buds during the previous growing season. These buds must experience a period of dormancy before they will open. After six weeks of cold temperatures, buds will usually come out of dormancy after two to three weeks of being exposed to warmth and moisture. Depending on your geographic location, usually by the time February arrives, most species suitable for forcing have experienced the required period of dormancy.

Coincidentally, late winter is the best time to prune deciduous trees and large shrubs. We usually head out into the yard with pruners in hand starting in January. We get a jump-start on our pruning along with an early gift of spring color inside our house. We prune our trees and shrubs for shape and to remove crossing branches and old or diseased wood. From the wood we have cut off the plant we select branches for forcing that are less than 1/2 inch in diameter and cut them to the desired length.

We like to prune on a mild winter day when the temperature is above freezing. Branches and buds are softer and more pliable and will be better able to make the transition from cold outdoor temperatures to warm indoor temperatures. We inspect the branches carefully when making our selections, looking for those with lots of plump flower buds. Flower buds are round and fat, whereas leaf buds are smaller and pointed. If we are not sure what type of bud we are looking at, we do a little bud surgery. When cut open, a flower bud will reveal miniature flower parts on the inside.

Top choices for forcing
Branches won’t flower until they’ve had a proper cold period, usually about six weeks. If you try to force a particular plant into bloom and it doesn’t work, it may be too early. Try it again in a couple of weeks.

Recut branches and place them in a cool spot inside
Our method for processing branches is pretty straightforward; we cut and gather the branches and bring them inside. We then add floral preservative, according to the instructions on the package, to a bucket of warm (100° to 110°F) water and set it aside. (You can make your own preservative with 1 tablespoon of Listerine or 1 tablespoon of lemon-lime soda per quart of water.) The preservative will promote hydration and retard bacterial growth, keeping the water clear for up to a week.

Next, we fill a sink with very warm water. Holding the stems underwater, we recut them at a severe angle an inch or two above the original cut (see the tip below). For larger branches—around 1/2 inch diameter—we split the end of the stem in half for a distance of about an inch to allow more of the interior of the stem to be available to take up water.

We immediately place the stems in the bucket of water. At this point we have a choice to make. We can simply store all of the stems in this bucket of water and set it aside in a cool place, like a protected porch or garage, where the temperature is 45° to 55°F, then arrange the branches for display when the first buds begin to show color. Or we could immediately create an arrangement, put the masterpiece in a place of prominence, and watch as the buds slowly swell and spring into bloom. In either case, to keep the branches healthy, we will change the water and add new preservative each week, or when we notice the water starting to discolor. Both before and during bloom, place the branches away from bright, direct sunlight and away from any direct heat source, which will dry out the buds and branches and reduce overall bloom color and quality. Ideally, try to duplicate the cool, moist environment of spring weather. If you use common sense when selecting a location, your blooms should look good for at least a week. Branches forced for their foliage will last even longer.

Most plant material that forces well is readily available in your backyard. By cutting several branches each week as winter turns to spring, you can have a continuous show of color during January, February, and March. Sometimes there are even surprises, so it pays to experiment. Last fall, expecting nothing, we cut some forsythia branches for accents in a large arrangement for our Thanksgiving celebration. To our surprise and delight, the forsythia bloomed in time for the holiday.

On the last page is a listing of the branch varieties that force the best.
MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEERS OF MANITOWOC COUNTY
MONTHLY MEETING

DATE: November 22, 2010
TIME: 6:30 p.m.
PLACE: Manitowoc County Office Complex
ATTENDANCE: 17

The November meeting was called to order by President Pat Hollen. The minutes of the October meeting were approved as published in the newsletter. The treasurer’s report was read and also approved.

OLD BUSINESS
1. Membership dues are to be paid to Doris by January 1st.
2. Rosie reported that there will be a bus trip on Friday, July 22nd to the Ball Seed Company in Chicago and the Cantigny Gardens. Lunch will be included in the fare of $55 - $65.
3. Plant sale drafts were returned to Kari Alice.
4. Chelle reviewed the information on the Mad Dog & Merrill presentation. It would be held on Thursday, August 11 from 6 – 8 p.m. with an admission charge of $5. There will be approximately 40 minutes of grilling instructions with the entire presentation lasting about 2 hours. Rosie then questioned whether or not we need a deputy or a license and what the costs will be. No one else had any questions, and Judy Lango then made a motion to continue to pursue this idea. Chris seconded it. All were in favor of going ahead with this idea.
5. Dorothy had 2011 calendars available for $13 each.
6. Ann Unertl summarized her plans for the Garden Walk. She has a goal of having 700 people tour the gardens. She plans to send letters to Master Gardener groups in the surrounding areas, and she also read a news release that she has prepared for publication. Ann will also have fliers distributed ahead of time and send publicity to various publications such as Wisconsin Trails Magazine. Rosie suggested that she consider having a place locally where people can purchase advance tickets.
7. Kari Alice and Judy Lango recently met to discuss plans for the Annual Dinner Meeting in April.

NEW BUSINESS
1. A letter was received from Woodland Dunes requesting money as a contributor to their membership. A motion was made by Chelle, seconded by Dorothy to contribute to Woodland Dunes. Motion carried.
2. Changes to the newsletter format were then discussed. The consensus was that it was fine with the use of the 11x17 paper.
3. Marjorie Holmes is requesting that a MG member do a presentation for the homemaker group with the focus on gardening and cooking with herbs and/or container gardening. Handouts may also be necessary. Kari Alice offered to discuss this with Faye Mahlik to learn what will be required.
4. Dorothy has volunteer hour sheets and volunteer agreements for those who have yet to complete them. Also the Sheboygan Master Gardeners still have registration bags available from the annual WIMGA conference. The Fond du Lac Master Gardeners are having their Annual Day in the Garden on April 2, and the Annual WIMGA Conference will be August 5th and 6th in Madison.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Tisler, Secretary

MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEERS OF MANITOWOC COUNTY
MONTHLY MEETING

DATE: December 3, 2010
TIME: 6:00 p.m.
PLACE: Home of Pat and Stan Hollen
ATTENDANCE: 14

This was our Christmas Party so graciously hosted by the Hollens. No business meeting was held.
January 21-22, 2011  Garden Visions 2011  Stevens Point, WI
Conference for Cold Climate Gardeners Under the Cloak of Winter at The Ramada, Stevens Point. Sponsored by the North Central Wisconsin MGA. Full details to follow on gardenvisions.org or For more information call Carol Bray at (715) 693-6446 or email gardenvisions@gmail.com.

January 24, 2011  Manitowoc Co. MGV Monthly Meeting  6:30pm
Location:  Manitowoc Co. Office Complex
Speaker:  Kelly Verron, Woodland Dunes

Jan 27, 2011  Fruit Tree Growing for the Backyard Gardener, Part 1  Green Bay, WI
The first in a three part series will cover cultivar and site selection and proper planting techniques. From 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Ag & Extension Service Center, 1150 Bellvue St., Green Bay. $5, pre-registration required. For more information or to register contact Debi Nitka at (920) 465-8512.

Jan 28, 2011  (12:00 noon)  Fruit Production Update: The Year In-Review
Brown Bag Program  Manitowoc Office Complex
Dick Weidman, Superintendent Peninsular Agricultural Research Station will share his observations on the performance of various fruit crops during the 2010 growing season. He will also share the observed effects and impacts of the open-winter of 2009/2010 on certain fruit cultivars. The Peninsular ARS has been testing and evaluating cultivars for Wisconsin for years. Join us for an update on fruit crop performance.

Feb 2, 2011  Fruit Tree Growing for the Backyard Gardener, Part 1  Green Bay, WI
The second in a three part series will cover pruning basics, fertilizer and nutritional value, alternate bearing and more. From 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Ag & Extension Service Center, 1150 Bellvue St., Green Bay. $5, preregistration required. For more information or to register contact Debi Nitka at (920) 465-8512.

Feb 10, 2011  Fruit Tree Growing for the Backyard Gardener, Part 1  Green Bay, WI
The last in a three part series will cover chemical applications, insect and disease control and organic vs. non-organic treatments. From 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Ag & Extension Service Center, 1150 Bellvue St., Green Bay. $5, preregistration required. For more information or to register contact Debi Nitka at (920) 465-8512.

Feb 22, 2011  Herbs of the Bible  Green Bay Botanical Garden, Green Bay, WI
Time began in a garden:  This class from 6:15 to 7:45 p.m. presents a short overview of the herbs of the Bible - their medicinal and culinary uses, and the cultural impact of garden imagery as presented in the Christian Bible. Reference will be given to the Garden of Eden, "faith the size of a mustard seed", "bitter herbs", and frankincense and myrrh that color our literature and separate the reality from the metaphors. A Bible Garden in Wisconsin is possible - plant choices will be discussed. $18 (member $12) pre-registration required. For more information, contact the Green Bay Botanical Garden, 2600 Larsen Road, P.O. Box 12644, Green Bay, WI 54307-2644 at (920) 490-9457
Feb 25, 2011 (12:00 noon) Brown Bag Program Manitowoc County Office Complex
Topic to be determined

Feb 26, 2011 Green Up Your Winter Blues Port Washington, WI
Sponsored by the Port Washington Garden Club, this seminar has a wide variety of informative ses-
sions. At the Ozaukee Co. Courthouse, Port Washington. $25, pre-reg after Jan 1 required. For more
information contact Tom Hudson at (262) 284-1948.

February 28, 2011 Manitowoc Co. MGV Monthly Meeting 6:30pm
Location: Manitowoc Co. Office Complex
Speaker: Judy Lango -- Slides of Africa

March 8, 2011 Season Extenders Green Bay Botanical Garden, Green Bay, WI
Are you yearning for fresh lettuce or spinach in May? Join Luke Wojcik from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. to learn
about which crops to start early, how to build high tunnels, small scale cold frames, materials to use
and some handy cultural techniques to start your vegetables earlier. These same techniques can also
be used to prolong the season in fall. $14 (member $7) pre-registration required. For more informa-
tion, contact the Green Bay Botanical Garden, 2600 Larsen Road, P.O. Box 12644, Green Bay, WI
54307-2644 at (920) 490-9457

March 12, 2011 Pruning Workshop Neenah, WI
The Winnebago Co. MGA is offering this half-day workshop on pruning ornamental trees and shrubs.
Long-time MGVs Roy Anne Moulton and Audrey Ruedinger will lead the session. Time and location
TBD. For more information contact Audrey Ruedinger at (920) 231-5745

The Manitowoc County Garden Walk Information

The Manitowoc County University Extension Master Gardeners will be hosting the Manitowoc County
Garden Walk on Saturday, July 16, 2011. Mark your calendars and set the whole day aside to discover
our “country gardens”. Each one is charming and shares its very own uniqueness. There’s something
for everyone to enjoy—from bold and beautiful to quiet and peaceful—full shade to full sun.
Fill up your gas tank and your picnic basket because this garden walk will be a “road trip” throughout
Manitowoc County. There are NINE gardens to explore—from Maribel to Two Rivers to Whitelaw to
Collins Marsh area to almost Newton.
Here are the names and addresses of the very generous country gardeners that will share their personal
garden haven: 1. Patricia Blakeslee, 17139 Cty Rd R, Maribel. 2. Bill & Donna Ney, 6716 Sunset Dr.,
Two Rivers. 3. Rick & Pat Herman, 7115 Village Dr., Whitelaw. 4. Michael & Gail Miller, 4906 Danmar
Rd., Whitelaw. 5. Randy & Mary Siebold, 270 W. Circle Dr., Whitelaw. 6. Wayne & Joyce Draheim,
Please show your gratitude for the generosity of these gardeners by participating in this day long event.
Early cutting time to force branches

- Willows – for catkins (Salix spp. and cvs.)
- Serviceberries (Amelanchier spp. and cvs.)
- Red maple (Acer rubrum)
- Quinces (Chaenomeles spp. and cvs.)
- PJM rhododendron (Rhododendron ‘PJM’)
- Magnolias (Magnolia spp. and cvs.)
- Eastern redbud (Cercis canadensis)
- Beeches – for catkins (Fagus spp. and cvs.)
- Beeches – for catkins (Fagus spp. and cvs.)
- Mid to late February

- Cherries (Prunus spp. and cvs.)
- Bradford pear (Pyrus calleryana ‘Bradford’)
- Late January/early February

- Witch hazels (Hamamelis spp. and cvs.)
- Forsythiarias (Forsythia spp. and cvs.)
- Filberts – for catkins (Corylus spp. and cvs.)
- Cornelian cherry (Cornus mas)