



September 2017

Dishing the Dirt with the Sherburne County Master Gardeners

The Sherburne County Master Gardeners are sending this out to you to keep you informed of our upcoming events, to share garden tips and to let you know what we have been doing. We hope that you enjoy reading this.

LATE SUMMER BUTTERFLY EXPLOSION

*If you have been spending time in your flower gardens recently, you may have noticed many brown and orange butterflies visiting plants to drink nectar. Adults of the Painted Lady butterfly, *Vanessa cardui*, are gathering at flowers in unusually large numbers to prepare themselves for migration down to the southwestern U.S. and northern Mexico. The Painted Lady butterfly is one of the most widely distributed of all butterfly species, but is not frequently seen in Minnesota most years. According to Chip Taylor, director of Monarch Watch at the University of Kansas, this is probably the largest migration he has seen in over 30 years (LJWorld.com September 8, 2017). These larger migrations often follow rainy periods in their wintering grounds.*

You can help these butterflies on their journey south by making sure that you

have flowers to provide them with the nectar they need to fuel their long journey and keeping these flowers free of pesticides. According to butterfliesandmoths.org these butterflies prefer nectar from composites 3-6 feet high, especially thistles; also aster, cosmos, blazing star, ironweed, joe-pye weed, red clover, and milkweeds. Many of these plants can also serve as food for the caterpillars if the adults make it this far north again next year. Unlike monarch caterpillars, which require milkweed, the painted lady caterpillars have been found on over 100 different host plants, but favorites include thistles and legumes.

If you have not already seen them, a visit to a pollinator garden planted with a variety of blooming flowers is likely to reward you with a stunning showcase of insect beauty.

SOURCE: <http://blog-yard-garden-news.extension.umn.edu/>



SEPTEMBER GARDENING TIP

Plant chrysanthemums, pansies, asters, and flowering kale for fall color. Remove dead annuals and add them to compost.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

BIG LAKE FARMER'S MARKET

WEDNESDAYS

3 - 7PM

ELK RIVER FARMER'S MARKET

THURSDAYS

2 - 6PM