

Taylor County Horticulture Newsletter

March 2023

Cooperative Extension Service
Taylor County
1143 South Columbia Ave.
Campbellsville, KY 42718
(270) 465-4511



University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service



UPCOMING EVENT

EASTERN STANDARD TIME



| | | |
|--------------------|---|-------------------|
| Friday, March 10 | Mason Bee Box (Location TBA) | 10:30 AM |
| Monday, March 13 | Busy Bloomer Garden Club Topic: | 1:00 PM |
| Monday, March 13 | Mason Bee Box | 5:30 PM |
| Thursday, March 16 | Green River Beekeepers (Location has changed to the Taylor County Extension Office) | 7:00 PM |
| Monday, March 20 | Spring Garden Décor Class | 1:30 PM & 5:30 PM |
| Tuesday, March 21 | 4-H Horticulture Program—Succulents | 3:30 PM |
| Thursday, March 23 | Strawberries & Brambles Class | 1:30 PM & 5:30 PM |
| Friday, March 31 | Farmers' Market Annual Meeting (Anyone interested in becoming a vendor is invited!) | 3:30 PM |

Feel free to visit our weekly Master Gardener classes each Thursday at 1:30 PM or 5:30 PM. Sign up for the Master Gardener class of 2024 will be in November.

Please call the Taylor County Extension Office at (270) 465-4511 to RSVP or if you have any questions.

Kara Back
County Extension
Agent for
Horticulture
Education

Cooperative Extension Service
Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

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LEXINGTON, KY 40546



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with prior notification.



Monthly Tips and Tasks for March



Houseplants

- Two handsome houseplants that provide fragrant blossoms indoors this month are the Confederate jasmine and Japanese pittosporum. Both thrive in average home conditions and are easy plants to grow.
- As day lengths increase, plants begin new growth. Repot rootbound plants, moving them to containers 2 inches larger in diameter than their current pot. Check for insect activity and apply controls as needed. Leggy plants may be pruned now.

Lawns

- Mow lawns low to remove old growth before new growth begins.
- Apply broadleaf herbicides now for control of cool-season perennial and annual weeds. These must not be applied to areas that will be seeded soon.
- Apply controls for wild garlic. It will take several years of annual application for complete control.

Vegetables

- Any root crops such as horseradish, parsnips, Jerusalem artichokes, or carrots still in the ground from last year should be harvested before new green top growth appears.
 - Cultivate weeds and remove the old, dead stalks of last year's growth from the asparagus bed before the new spears emerge.
 - Fertilize the garden as the soil is being prepared for planting. Unless directed otherwise by a soil test, 1 to 2 pounds of 12-12-12 or an equivalent fertilizer per 100 square feet is usually sufficient.
 - Delay planting if the garden soil is too wet. When a ball of soil crumbles easily after being squeezed together in your hand, it is dry enough to be safely worked.
 - Plant peas, lettuce, radishes, kohlrabi, mustard greens, collards, turnips, Irish potatoes, spinach, and onions outdoors.
 - Plant beets, carrots, parsley and parsnip seeds outdoors.
- Set out broccoli, cabbage, Brussel sprouts, Chinese cabbage and cauliflower transplants into the garden.

Miscellaneous

- Red maples begin to bloom.
- Set up nesting boxes for bluebirds.
- Watch for the harbinger of spring blooming in rich wooded areas.
- Spicebush is blooming in moist woodlands.
- Raise purple martin houses this week.
- Purple martins return in the St. Louis area.
- The white flowers of serviceberry and wild plum are showy in wooded areas.

Ornamentals

- Trees, shrubs and perennials may be planted as soon as they become available at local nurseries.
- To control iris borer, clean up and destroy the old foliage before new growth begins.
- Fertilize bulbs with a "bulb booster" formulation broadcast over the planting beds. Hose off any granules that stick to the foliage.
- Dormant mail order plants should be unwrapped immediately. Keep the roots from drying out, store in a cool protected spots, and plant as soon as conditions allow.
- Loosen winter mulches from perennials cautiously.
- Re-cover plants at night if frost returns.
- Clean up beds by removing all weeds and dead foliage at this time.
- Heavy pruning of trees should be complete before growth occurs. Trees should not be pruned while the new leaves are growing.
- Seeds of hardy annuals such as larkspur, bachelor's buttons, Shirley & California poppies should be direct sown in the garden now.
- Summer and fall blooming perennials should be divided in spring.
- Ornamental grasses should be cut to the ground just as the new growth begins.
- Spring bedding plants, such as pansies and toadflax may be planted outdoors now.
- Apply a balanced fertilizer such as a 6-12-12 to perennial beds when new growth appears.
- Apply sulfur to the soils around acid-loving plants such as azaleas, rhododendrons, hollies and dogwoods. Use a granular formulation at the rate of 1/2 pound per 100 square feet.
- Gradually start to pull back mulch from the rose bushes.

Fruits

- Gradually remove mulch from strawberries as the weather begins to warm.
- Continue pruning apple trees. Burn or destroy all prunings to minimize insect or disease occurrence.
- Continue pruning grapes. Bleeding causes no injury to the vines. The vines to the trellis before the buds swell to prevent bud injury and crop loss.
- Cleft and splice grafting can be done now. This must be completed before rootstocks break dormancy.
- Aphids begin to hatch on fruit trees as the buds begin to open.
- Apply dormant oil sprays now. Choose a dry day when freezing temperatures are not expected.
- Spray peach trees with a fungicide for the control of peach leaf curl disease.
- Mulch all bramble fruits for weed control.
- Peaches and nectarines should be pruned just before they bloom.

Winter Woes on Woody Landscape Plants: Winter Drying

The UK Plant Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (PDDL) has received many broadleaf and needled evergreen samples with discolored foliage recently. Despite relatively mild weather during much of the winter thus far, extremely low temperatures, low humidity, and strong winds during the third week of December 2022 resulted in a range of winter injury symptoms in landscape plants. Furthermore, other environmental and cultural stress factors preceded the severe weather in many cases and have contributed to the extent of damage visible now.

Symptoms

Since the beginning of January, most of the samples with winter injury that have arrived in the PDDL have shown symptoms of **winter drying**. On broadleaf evergreens (boxwood, cherry laurel, holly, magnolia, rhododendron, etc.) symptoms typically include marginal leaf scorch, irregular spotting, complete browning of the leaves, and occasionally extensive leaf drop. Conifer (arborvitae, Leyland cypress, Cryptomeria, juniper, etc.) symptoms include pale, bronze or brown needles or needle tips, particularly on the exterior foliage and branch tips. Symptoms are often more noticeable on the wind-exposed side of affected plants.



Causes of Winter Injury

Unlike their deciduous counterparts, “evergreen” plants retain foliage year-round. Even during winter months when active growth is not occurring, water is still lost through the leaves and needles of these plant species via transpiration, although more slowly than during times of active growth. Environmental and cultural factors that affect overall moisture availability in plants increase the likelihood of winter drying symptoms, including:

- Areas where soil is frozen, limiting, or preventing water uptake by roots.
- Low moisture retained in leaves/needles due to drought (i.e., late summer and fall 2022).
- Sunny winter days with wind and low humidity which increase transpiration rates.
- Inadequate root systems from recent transplanting (within 3-4 years), a restricted root zone (due to nearby sidewalk, driveway, or building) or mechanical injury to roots.

Plants or sections of plants in a protected area (i.e., along a warm brick wall) that have not completely hardened off).

Management of Winter Injury Symptoms

Resisting the urge to promptly remove the damaged plant material may be difficult, but for the next several weeks,

patience is key. Often the foliage is damaged, but the stems and buds are still viable and will produce new healthy growth in spring. A “wait and see” approach is often best when dealing with winter-injured plants. When new growth begins to emerge in spring, it will be clear which symptoms are “cosmetic” and which symptoms indicate significant plant damage.

To help reduce the risk of winter drying in the future, good general plant care practices, such as watering during periods of drought and applying mulch, are beneficial. Supply adequate irrigation to broadleaf evergreen and conifer plants, especially late in the growing season so that plants have sufficient moisture during the winter months. Fertilizer is not typically recommended as this can encourage succulent top growth that is easily damaged in winter. If fertilizer must be applied, a fall application is best, since spring fertilization may promote more new growth than roots can support during summer droughts. Locate sensitive plants in sheltered locations. If severe cold and wind is predicted, protect plants that are prone to winter drying and located in exposed sites with temporary fencing to block the wind or a light covering of burlap or fabric (e.g., old bed sheets). Wetting the fabric before windy weather will allow the covering to freeze, increasing wind protection.

By Julie Beale, Plant Disease Diagnostician, and Sara Long, Plant Diagnostic Assistant
Review of this article by Dr. Bill Fountain, UK Extension Horticulture Specialist Emeritus, is gratefully acknowledged

Mason Bees in the Garden



One of the native bees to emerge early in spring is the mason bee, *Osmia*. There are several species of these bees found in Pennsylvania and they are active from mid-April to mid-June. The blue orchard bee (*Osmia lignaria*) prefers flowers in the rose family and is a valuable pollinator for apples, cherries, and plums. Research shows that blue orchard bees visit more flowers per minute than do European honeybees and they are more efficient at transferring pollen from one flower to the next.

Male mason bees emerge first in spring and the females follow several days later. Once they mate, females search for an appropriate nesting site. These are solitary bees. Each female finds her own nest, marks the entrance with her own unique scent, lays eggs in it, and then provides food for her young. Nest sites are often hollow stems or crevices. The eggs are laid from the back of the hollow forward, and the female builds a

mud partition between each egg. Eggs laid toward the back become females and those toward the front, males. The female gathers both nectar and pollen to feed her larvae. The larvae pupate in the nest in mid-summer, emerge as adults in late summer and overwinter in the nest until they emerge the following spring.

Besides growing pollinator friendly plants in your garden for bees, you can also provide nesting habitats. Since mason bees like to build nests in natural tube-shaped structures, it is possible to attract them with commercial or homemade nesting boxes. These boxes should be firmly attached to a solid structure and placed in an area protected from high winds and rain (i.e., with some sort of overhang over the tubes) at least three feet above the ground. The front should face south or southeast. Obviously, there should be pollinator friendly plants nearby as well as a supply of mud (which can be manmade).

Source: <https://extension.psu.edu/mason-bees-in-the-home-garden>



Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab Highlights

The following plant disease highlights have been compiled from samples submitted to the University of Kentucky Plant Disease Diagnostic Laboratory from January 3 to January 31, 2023. Although a few agronomic and greenhouse vegetable samples were received during this period, the majority of diagnostic samples for the first month of 2023 were ornamental crops, including both greenhouse ornamentals and landscape plants.

Samples included Trichoderma ear rot on corn; Pythium root rot on arugula and bok choy; foliar injury from greenhouse air quality problems on tomato; nutrient deficiency/high pH problems and powdery mildew on calibrachoa; Pythium root rot on pansy and petunia; thrips injury on oxalis; chilling injury and red thread disease on bluegrass; Botryosphaeria canker on arborvitae; hemlock borer injury on hemlock; black root rot on holly; and winter injury/winter desiccation on arborvitae, boxwood, and holly.

Red thread (Figure 1) made an early appearance this year due to warmer-than-typical temperatures in January. This disease may be eye-catching but rarely requires management in home lawns; for information on management of red thread in sports turf, refer to UK Extension publication *Chemical Control of Turfgrass Diseases*.

By Julie Beale, Plant Disease Diagnostician, and Sara Long, Plant Diagnostic Assistant



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Busy Bloomers Garden Club

Monthly meetings are the 2nd Monday
of each month at 1:00 p.m.

Membership is **FREE!!**

For more information contact Horticulture Agent Kara Back at the
Taylor County Cooperative Extension Office

Phone: (270) 465-4511



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Blueberry French Toast Bake

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|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| ¼ cup whole wheat flour | 3 eggs | 1 cup fresh blueberries |
| ¼ cup all-purpose flour | 6 egg whites | ½ cup chopped almonds |
| 1½ cups skim milk | 1 loaf (12 ounces) French bread, cut into 1 inch cubes | Honey, if desired |
| 1 tablespoon sugar | 3 ounces fat free cream cheese, cut into ½ inch cubes | |
| ½ teaspoon vanilla | | |
| ¼ teaspoon salt | | |

Generously **grease** a 13x9x2-inch baking dish. **Beat** flours, milk, sugar, vanilla, salt, eggs and egg whites in a large mixing bowl with a hand mixer until smooth. **Stir** in bread cubes until they are coated. **Pour** bread mixture into baking dish. **Top** evenly with cream cheese, blueberries and almonds. **Cover** and **refrigerate** for at least 1 hour, but no longer than 24

hours. **Heat** oven to 400 degrees F. **Uncover** and **bake** 20-25 minutes or until golden brown. **Sprinkle** with honey, if desired.

Yield: 8, 1 cup servings

Nutritional Analysis: 420 calories, 6 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 70 mg cholesterol, 860 mg sodium, 69 g carbohydrate, 4 g fiber, 9 g sugar.



Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.