

# Sequatchie Valley Master Gardeners

A Program of the University of Tennessee Extension Sequatchie and Bledsoe Counties

June 2025

## Gardening News and Notes

### 2025 Dates

- July 26, 2025, Tomato Tasting – Pikeville
- August 5-9, 2025, Bledsoe County Fair
- August 14-16, 2025, Sequatchie County Fair
- November 1, 2025, MG Meeting – Dunlap

### 2025 Field Day and Events

- Fruits of the Backyard – June 10, 8 a.m. CDT, Middle Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center at Spring Hill
- Summer Celebration – July 10, 8 a.m. CDT, West Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center, Jackson, TN
- Steak and Potatoes – August 21, 8 a.m. CDT, Plateau AgResearch and Education Center at Crossville
- Fall Gardeners' Festival – August 26, 8 a.m. CDT, Plateau AgResearch and Education Center at Crossville

### What is it?

Yellow spots on apple leaves. Gala and Golden Delicious, along with several older varieties, are affected. So, what is the problem? See the last page for the answer.



**The Extension Master Gardener  
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**The University of Tennessee is an  
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# UT Gardens Plant of the Month

## June Plant of the Month

### Hardy Geraniums Stand Out Under Trees and Shrubs, Trouble Areas, and Partial Shade Gardens

Submitted by Jennifer Northam, collections manager and horticulturist, UT Gardens, Knoxville



Geranium hybrid 'Rozanne' is a powerhouse, blooming strongly in the fall as well as spring with no need to cut back. Photo by J. Northam, courtesy UTIA.

Hardy geraniums, also known as cranesbills, are loved in the garden because of their versatility and durability.

They are commonly known as cranesbills because their fruit is shaped like a crane's bill. The Greek word geranion translates to crane in English. There are around 300 species of hardy geraniums. They can be found in several countries and oceanic islands across the world. Species range in height from only a few inches to species like *Geranium arboreum* that can grow 12 feet tall.

Several species of hardy geraniums are very easy to grow and drought-tolerant once established. They can be used in understory plantings, under trees and shrubs, popped into bare spots and trouble areas where other plants will not grow. Include them in rock gardens, woodland settings, as ground covers, in containers, in partial shade gardens, and in mixed perennial borders and beds.

Several species and cultivars will bloom in spring and then again in the fall, and some will bloom all season long from about April to September. They attract bees and butterflies and are deer and rabbit resistant. Many of the hardy geranium species growing in Knoxville send out their first buds around mid-April.

Flowers come in shades of white, pink, lavender, magenta, and blue. Some varieties have darker veins on the petals, which is very unique and attractive. Another great quality of these perennials is that the foliage alone is beautiful for most of the year. Leaves can be green, burgundy, gray-green, and yellow, and come in all kinds of different shapes and textures. Many varieties will turn colors of purple, yellow, orange, and red in the fall.

Most of the hardy geraniums we grow in Knoxville prefer partial shade and good drainage. They will need more shade in the heat of West Tennessee and most of the South, and will not tolerate wet spots.

After the first flush of flowers in the spring, plants can be sheared back to basal foliage and will have a good chance of blooming again. Geranium hybrid 'Rozanne' is a powerhouse, blooming strongly in the fall as well as spring with no need to cut back. The cultivar is a favorite for its strong vigor, large blue blooms, long bloom times, resilience, and functionality in the garden. Geranium 'Rozanne' can be found in the Post Wild Perennial Garden, as well as *G. macrorrhizum* 'Bevan's Variety', *G. pratense* 'Boom Chocolatta', and *G. sanguineum* 'Max Frei'.

We are trialing a new geranium hybrid 'Huggy Bear' in Knoxville from Intrinsic Perennial Gardens, Inc. This variety has unique chocolatey bronze foliage and lavender-purple flowers. They grew well over the summer in full sun and doubled in size last fall, thriving in milder temperatures. Vigorous growth followed this spring that contrasted perfectly with several blooms. In Crossville, you'll find 'Johnson's Blue' and 'Biokovo' cultivars planted in the entrance gardens and 'Karmina' in the perennial beds.

There are so many cultivars to choose from, one could spend decades collecting different ones and trying them all over a garden area. Consider species and cultivars that will do well for your hardiness zone. Hardy geraniums do not thrive in warmer parts of Tennessee and the South, so make sure these are in the shade from midday on. From full sun to part shade, difficult to grow garden spots, multiple season interest, and overall charm, hardy geraniums are a real winner to use in the garden.



# Gardening Tips

“Gardening requires lots of water - most of it in the form of perspiration.”

Lou Erickson

## July

The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture recommends keeping up with the following chores to keep your garden in top shape this July.

### Perennials, Annuals, & Bulbs

- Remove dead flowers from various annuals and perennials to encourage profuse blooming. This practice is also called deadheading.
- Cut back tall, fall-flowering perennials such as swamp sunflower, joe-pye weed, iron weed, mums, and asters by one-third to one-half to reduce their ultimate height and to prevent them from lodging (falling over).
- Purchase fall-blooming perennials such as anemone and hardy sunflowers. Be sure to water these plants until they become well established in your garden.

### Shrubs & Trees

- Prune hydrangeas right after they bloom if you want to cut them back. Since flower buds are formed in the late summer and early fall, pruning later in the year will remove next year's flowers.
- Prune Clematis and Wisteria when they are finished flowering.

### Fruits & Veggies

- Harvest vegetables regularly to keep your garden productive.
- Plant green beans by July 10.
- Cover fruit trees with netting to protect the fruit from birds.
- Prune blackberries after harvest has ended. Remove the dying canes and tip back the vigorous, new growth two or three times to form a dense hedge for greater fruit production.
- Begin preparing your fall garden. To get plants started in time for harvest before the first freeze, set out broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower transplants and sow lettuce, collards, kale, and spinach seeds in late July or early August.

### Lawn Care

- It's okay to stop watering your lawn and let it go dormant. As cooler weather and rainfall return, it will revive. If you prefer that your lawn be green and lush through summer, mow it at a higher height and water deeply. Applying water in the early morning is best.

## Interested in Growing Berries in Your Backyard?

Come to the UTIA Fruits of the Backyard Field Day June 10



Berry production will be the focus of the UT Institute of Agriculture Fruits of the Backyard Field Day in Spring Hill on June 10. Photo of blackberries growing at the Middle Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center by H. Harbin, courtesy UTIA.

Blackberries, blueberries, and elderberries are in focus at the 18<sup>th</sup> annual Fruits of the Backyard Field Day. Scheduled for June 10, this free event is hosted by the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture at the Middle Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center. UT researchers and Extension specialists will share valuable tips on choosing varieties to grow, as well as how to set yourself up for success for small-scale production.

“We invite both backyard growers and larger scale producers,” says Kevin Thompson, center director. “The presentations and educational displays will provide useful information about products and techniques to improve your production and provide insight for landscaping solutions, raised bed irrigation, and planting options.” Thompson adds that tours will be provided of the center’s blackberry and blueberry research trial plots.

“The field day program has been developed to help you make your backyard a more productive and enjoyable place to spend time with family and friends,” says Thompson. “We look forward to hosting neighbors and friends alike.”

Fruits of the Backyard is June 10, 2025, from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. CDT. Registration will begin at 8 a.m. Anyone, from home growers to commercial producers, is welcome to attend the free event, which will take place at the Middle Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center located at 1000 Main Entrance Drive in Spring Hill.

For more information on the field day, including directions, visit [middletn.tennessee.edu](http://middletn.tennessee.edu) or call 931-486-2129. For a full calendar of the 2025 Field Days, visit [agresearch.tennessee.edu](http://agresearch.tennessee.edu).

The University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture is comprised of the Herbert College of Agriculture, UT College of Veterinary Medicine, UT AgResearch and UT Extension. Through its land-grant mission of teaching, research and outreach, the Institute touches lives and provides Real. Life. Solutions. to Tennesseans and beyond. [utia.tennessee.edu](http://utia.tennessee.edu).

## What is it? Answered.

Cedar-apple rust, a fungal disease caused by *Gymnosporangium juniperi-virginianae* that affects apples, crabapples, and junipers. The disease cycle involves the fungus spending nearly two years on junipers (such as eastern red cedars), producing galls that release spores, and infecting apple trees during warm, moist conditions. Symptoms on apples include yellow-orange leaf spots, fruit lesions, and defoliation, which can weaken trees and reduce fruit quality.

Control methods include growing resistant apple varieties, removing nearby infected plants, pruning infected junipers, and applying fungicides such as Immunox during specific growth stages.

Bost, Steve. *Cedar-Apple Rust*. SP 277-A. University of Tennessee Extension, Entomology and Plant Pathology. Accessed via UT Extension website: <https://utia.tennessee.edu/publications/wp-content/uploads/sites/269/2023/10/SP277-A.pdf>



“Cedar-apple” gall on cedar. Photo from publication SP277-A



Leaf spots of cedar-apple rust on apple. Photo source SP277-A

### Solutions:

1. Resistant varieties - Redfree, Liberty, Freedom, Enterprise
2. Follow the recommended spray schedule – see [Disease and Insect Control in Home Fruit Plantings PB 1622](https://utia.tennessee.edu/publications/wp-content/uploads/sites/269/2023/10/PB1622.pdf) <https://utia.tennessee.edu/publications/wp-content/uploads/sites/269/2023/10/PB1622.pdf>
3. Winter pruning and cleaning – Proper pruning and cleaning of the orchard help maintain healthy trees.

Disease and Insect Control in Home Fruit Plantings PB 1622 <https://utia.tennessee.edu/publications/wp-content/uploads/sites/269/2023/10/PB1622.pdf>

Cedar-Apple Rust. <https://utia.tennessee.edu/publications/wp-content/uploads/sites/269/2023/10/SP277-A.pdf>

MAY 2025

# THE UTHORT HUB

Official News Hub of the UTHort Team

## Sunshine Vibes and Summer Highs

As springtime wanes, we excitedly welcome summer across the state of Tennessee. Our summer gardens will soon be in full swing, along with bountiful berries and orchard fruits, gorgeous landscapes, and running barefoot through our home turf! As we ramp up for our summer task lists in the home garden, lawn, and landscape, we have several great tips and resources to get you growing in the right direction this summer season!

Be sure to peruse our vast selection of resources on our [UTHort website](#) to get you off and growing this summer...

## 2025 Lawn Maintenance Calendar

A graphic for the 2025 Lawn Maintenance Calendar. It features a green background with a close-up of grass and water droplets. The text "2025" is large and white, with "LAWN MAINTENANCE CALENDAR" in smaller white capital letters below it.

**2025**  
LAWN MAINTENANCE  
CALENDAR

[UTHort  
Resources](#)

## This Issue:

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## New Home Fruit Publications Released

Our teams have continued to work diligently on developing educational resources to assist gardeners in growing fruit crops in Tennessee. We are excited to announce the release of the two following publications (please click each title below to access):

- [Selecting Grapes](#)
- [Selecting Peaches, Plums, and Cherries](#)



## New Small Space Food Production Publication Series Released

Raised beds, containers, and even indoor food production continue to attract both new and experienced gardeners. And, our team always wants to meet gardeners where they are with resources to get them growing well. These three new publications are designed to equip gardeners for getting the most out of their small spaces.

- [Outdoor Small Space Food Production](#)
- [Indoor Small Space Food Production](#)
- [Crops and Cultivars for Small Space Food Production](#)



## Too Rainy to Plant?

[Check out the recordings from our Space Food Series](#)

In May, our UTHort team held a lunch and learn webinar series with an hour-long session each Tuesday.

[Click HERE to access the whole YouTube Playlist](#)

Each week delivered two presentations on key topics to support small space production in Tennessee.

Week 1- Site/light + vegetable favorites

Week 2- Media and materials + herbs

Week 3- Water/nutrients + fruit favorites

Week 4- Avoiding pitfalls and pest and disease management

## [Office Hours in Horticulture](#)

Join the UTHort team for FREE live and interactive sessions answering all your lawn, landscape, and garden questions throughout the garden season...

[Sign up for Office Hours Here!](#)

June 13  
July 11  
September 12  
October 10

Everyone signed up will receive reminder and recap emails!



## We hope to see you this summer!

With summer right around the corner, we hope that you are making use of great Tennessee Extension resources and programs to support your gardening and horticulture. From websites to publications, to webinars series, there is a great suite of content to support you all.

We also hope that you are making plans to enjoy some of the great field days offered by University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture this summer!

June 10<sup>th</sup> - Fruits of the Backyard Field Day in Spring Hill, Tennessee

July 10<sup>th</sup> - Summer Celebration in Jackson, Tennessee

August 27<sup>th</sup> - Fall Gardener's Festival in Crossville, Tennessee



### Team contributors:

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## Master Gardener Spotlight

Tennessee Extension Master Gardener training officially ended on April 22nd with 559 interns well on their way to becoming certified Master Gardeners all across the state.

In addition, Master Gardeners are ramping up for three regional conferences to be held in each region of the state in May and June. We look forward to visiting with volunteers across the state! Learn more about the Tennessee Extension Master Gardener below...

[TN Extension Master Gardener Website](#) 

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## Turf Talk!

### Summer Lawn Care Tips...

- Gradually increase mowing height:
  - *Cool-season lawns* (e.g., tall fescue): Raise mowing height to **3.5 to 5 inches** to support deeper root growth and improve moisture access.
  - *Warm-season lawns* (e.g., bermudagrass, zoysiagrass): Raise mowing height to the upper end of the recommended range (around **2.5 to 3.5 inches**).
- Irrigate **deeply and infrequently!** Daily watering encourages shallow roots and weaker turf. Deep, infrequent watering builds resilience to heat, drought, and traffic stress.
- **Fertilize with balance** and care by using slow-release or organic fertilizers to reduce burn risk and environmental loss. Remember more is not always better.
- Watch for common summer turf diseases like Dollar Spot, Leaf Spot, and Brown Patch.
- Always confirm disease issue before treating:
  - Do not apply pesticides without correctly identifying the issue.
  - Contact your local UT Extension office for assistance with diagnosis and treatment recommendations.

[Discover Turf Resources Here...](#) 

