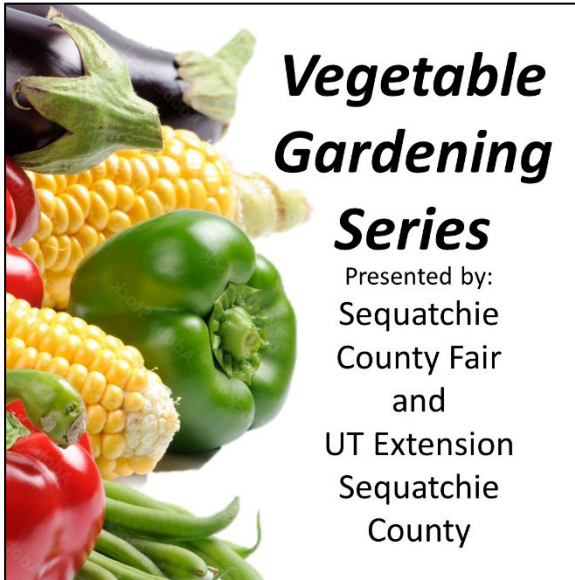


UT Extension Sequatchie Co. Horticulture and Gardening Monthly News & Notes February 2023



Gardening basics and more for the beginner and the experienced gardener

January's class was a great success with 28 total people (20 from the public and 8 MGs and Interns), the next class in the series is coming soon see the list below.

- The February 16, 2023 - Straw Bale Gardening Basics class will cover how to prepare straw bales and some tips for Straw Bale Gardening.
- March 16, 2023 - The Gardening with Containers and Raised Beds class will examine growing vegetables in raised beds and containers. A great way to grow vegetables in small areas or on a small scale.
- April 20, 2023 - Growing Tomatoes, we will cover one, if not the most, frequently grown vegetable in the garden, with tips on how to have a prize-winning tomato.

All classes are at 6:00 PM CST and will be at the Sequatchie Co. Fair Building, 103 Heard St. Dunlap, TN

Contact the UT Extension office at 949-2611 or email sdbarker@utk.edu for more information.

Sponsored by the Sequatchie County Fair and UT Extension Sequatchie County **these classes are free to the public.**

New Publication

Selecting Apples and Pears for Residential Production in Tennessee

<https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W895D.pdf>

Other Fruit Tree Publications

- "Home Tree Fruit Plan" - <https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/SP307-H.pdf>
- "Fruit Tree Management Timetable" - <https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/SP307-D.pdf>
- Find more at <https://www.uthort.com/category/trees-fruits/>

Sheldon D. Barker • 423.949.2611 • sdbarker@utk.edu • Sequatchie County

[Facebook](#) • [YouTube](#) • [Instagram](#) • [website](#)

Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development.
University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating.
UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

UT Gardens Plant of the Month

Viburnums for Tennessee Gardens

Submitted by Andy Pulte, Distinguished Lecturer and Director, GATOP Gardens

Viburnums are a versatile and popular choice for use in the Tennessee landscape. These shrubs and small trees can be used in a variety of ways. They are known for their four-season interest including attractive flowers, berries, and foliage. Viburnums are also a great choice for attracting birds and wildlife to the garden. Many are easy to grow and are tolerant of a wide range of soils and environments, this makes them a natural choice for the garden.

Viburnums require minimal maintenance in the landscape and the larger ones look great in the back of a garden border. Some of the most well-known, old standby viburnums used across the Southeast are the snowball bush (*Viburnum opulus*), Chinese snowball bush (*Viburnum macrocephalum*), fragrant snowball viburnum (*Viburnum x carlcephalum*), blackhaw viburnum (*Viburnum prunifolium*), arrowwood viburnum (*Viburnum dentatum*) and American cranberry bush viburnum (*Viburnum trilobum*).

As the State Botanical Garden of Tennessee tests new plants, we have a few newer viburnums we have really enjoyed. 'Spring Lace' hybrid viburnum (*Viburnum x 'Spring Lace'*) has been one of our favorites. You will see how it gets its name in mid-spring as it is covered in large white lace-cap-type flowers. A mid-sized plant at maturity, 5 feet wide by 5 feet tall tends to be its garden size.

Another winning new viburnum at our gardens is Pearlific® viburnum (*Viburnum 'PIVIB-I'*). This is a complex hybrid viburnum with good heat tolerance for our region. Flowers are pink in development and open to pure white. The floral scent is pleasant but not overpowering. A slightly smaller shrub, you can expect plants to reach 4 feet wide by 4 feet tall in 8 to 10 years and top out at 6 feet tall and wide over time.

I firmly believe there is room for at least one viburnum in almost every residential landscape. We have many native species in the United States and wildlife love them. As a group, you can find both evergreen and deciduous viburnums. Some of the deciduous selections are prized for their fall color. If you are not familiar with viburnums, let this article be the start of discovering the perfect viburnum for your landscape. We invite you to come see the diversity of viburnums growing at all the UT Gardens sites across the state.

The UT Gardens includes plant collections located in Knoxville, Crossville and Jackson, Tennessee. Designated as the official botanical garden for the State of Tennessee, the UT Gardens are part of the UT Institute of Agriculture. The Gardens' mission is to foster appreciation, education and stewardship of plants through garden displays, educational programs and research trials. The Gardens are open during all seasons and free to the public. For more information, see the Gardens website: utia.tennessee.edu/state-botanical-garden.



Eye-catching Viburnum 'Spring Lace' blooming in early April at the UT Gardens, Jackson. Photo courtesy of Jason Reeves.



Gardening Tips

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

Lou Erickson

March Tips

March... spring is almost here (at least according to the calendar and it is time to start the spring planting season.

- Climbing roses should not be pruned until after their first flush of growth. Now is a good time to tie the canes to support before they flush out with spring growth.
- Evaluate your vegetable garden plans. Often a smaller garden with fewer weeds and insects will give you more produce.
- When night temperatures get above 40 degrees feed your pansies with a water-soluble fertilizer such as 20-20-20.
- Apply a pre-emergence herbicide to your lawn if you have had crabgrass and other summer weeds in the past. Timing is important and a good indicator of when to apply is just as forsythia begins to show some color.
- Sow nasturtiums this month. Soak the seed overnight in water. Cover with $\frac{3}{4}$ inch soil.
- March is a good time to shop for and add lungwort (*Pulmonaria*) and Lenten rose (*Helleborus*) to your garden. Lungworts are early flowering shade perennials that often struggle in the heat and humidity of our Tennessee climate, so be aware that *Pulmonaria longifolia* and its cultivars and hybrids are much more durable. Good selections are 'Roy Davidson,' 'E. B. Anderson,' 'Trevi Fountain' and my favorite for its vigor and heat tolerance, 'Diana Claire.'

March is an ideal time to cut back the following garden plants:

- *Miscanthus* (maiden grass), *Pennisetum* (fountain grass), *Muhlenbergia* (muhly grass), and *Nassella* (Mexican feather grass) to 3 inches to 6 inches above the ground.
- *Hydrangea arborescens* 'Annabelle' flowers on new wood. To encourage a stronger stem and tidy appearance, cut the stem anywhere from 3 to 12 inches from the ground. If you have several plants, try them at different heights to determine what works best for you.
- *Liriope* (Monkey grass) before new growth appears. Use a string trimmer for larger areas.
- Hardy fern (particularly evergreen forms) before new growth appears.
- Epimedium (barrenwort) flowers early so don't delay.
- *Acorus* (sweet flag) and *Carex* only if the winter has browned the foliage.
- Prune out older branches on *Cornus sericea* and *Cornus sanguinea* (red twig dogwood) to encourage new growth with bright colored bark.
- Summer-flowering *Spirea japonica* is best cut back before the new growth appears and you won't even know it come spring. A few common cultivars are 'Gold Mound,' 'Magic Carpet' and 'Gold Flame.'
- Cut older branches on *Callicarpa* (beautyberry) to encourage new growth that produces more berries.
- Rejuvenate overgrown *Nandina* by cutting back to a few inches on the outside, leaving taller canes in the center, staggering the heights.
- Limb-up and remove cross branches on trees and tree-type crapemyrtles as needed.
- Never top trees or crapemyrtles. For more information on pruning crapemyrtles; <https://www.uthort.com/proper-crape-myrtle-pruning/> and <https://www.familyplotgarden.com/pruning-not-murdering-crape-myrtles.html>
- Look closely at grafted plants and remove all growth below the graft, paying close attention to commonly grafted plants like witchhazels, contorted filberts, weeping cherries, weeping mulberries, dogwoods, fruit trees, crabapples, grafted rose, and Japanese maples.
- Early March is the best time to carry out drastic pruning on overgrown hollies.

Guide to Spring-Planted, Cool-Season Vegetables

- The what, when, and how of cool-season vegetables
<https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/SP291-O.pdf>
- Check out <https://www.uthort.com/> for more gardening and horticulture information.

Other Programs

Master Backyard Poultry Program Offered

Learn the Basics of Backyard Poultry

The University of Tennessee Extension Sequatchie County will be offering the Master Backyard Poultry Class Tuesdays beginning March 14, 2023.

The seven-session program will be Tuesdays March 14 - April 25, at 6:00 PM at the Sequatchie County Fair Building. The Cost of the program is \$100.00. Pre-registration is required, and the deadline is March 3, 2023.

Anyone interested in backyard poultry, beginning or experienced, will find the program useful and are welcome to participate.

The Master Backyard Poultry Producer program focuses on developing producers' skills and knowledge in backyard poultry production focusing on topics such as:

- Biosecurity & Disease Control
- Management – Husbandry
- Housing
- Environmental Management
- Financials
- Marketing
- Processing
- Regulations
- NPIP Certification

Besides the educational opportunities the program will allow you to meet and network with other producers and educators. Learn more at <https://tiny.utk.edu/SeqPoultry>, you can pre-register at the site as well.

Contact the UT Extension Sequatchie County office at 423-949-2611 or email Sheldon Barker at sdbarker@utk.edu for details.

